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A Workers' Paradise: Re-integrating Newfoundland into Colonial American History

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A WORKERS' PARADISE:
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An Abstract of the Thesis by
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The island of Newfoundland is conspicuous in colonial British and North American histories, most particularly and paradoxically, in its absence, a state of affairs which this study aims to address. Multiple factors, including a paucity of documentary sources and various historiographic trends, have traditionally contributed to Newfoundland's marginalization within colonial historical narratives. However, Newfoundland's potential integration into the broader colonial dialogue has recently become more feasible, particularly with the advent of the Atlantic perspective. Additionally, the expansion of available sources and the work of multiple regional historians have challenged enduring historiographic trends characterizing Newfoundland colonial settlements as marginal, failed, or backward. This study seeks to affirm the island's historical importance within the Atlantic basin between the sixteenth century and the nineteenth century, and to highlight the fact that colonial Newfoundland settlements actually had far more in common with those of their European settler counterparts in North America than the traditional historiography suggests. The surprising similarities and unique differences between the island's settlements and continental or Caribbean ones, largely unexplored by any but regional scholars, make the case for Newfoundland's fuller integration into colonial histories. Among these unique differences, the social and economic advantages available to working-class immigrants to Newfoundland are

particular areas of interest, as such advantages were uncommon to many of their counterparts elsewhere in the colonial Atlantic basin.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Before Europeans set foot on the mainland of the mighty continents of North and South America during the Age of Sail, they first encountered Atlantic islands. One of England's earliest seaborne colonial ventures was the twelfth-century conquest of Ireland. The Portuguese colonized the Azores and Madeira during the first half of the fifteenth century.[1] In 1497, just four years after Columbus landed at Haiti, the Genoese explorer, Zuan Chabotto (John Cabot) landed at Newfoundland, claiming it for England and Henry VII. At that time however, Basque, Portuguese, and perhaps also French and Spanish fishermen had each already established their own seasonal presence on the island or in the offshore fishing banks.[2] The Vikings established a short-lived settlement at L'Anse aux Meadows, Newfoundland sometime between 1000 CE and 1100 CE, centuries prior to the beginning of broader European colonial settlement in North America.[3] The island's rich fishery emerged as a central colonial enterprise around 1500,

[1] Noel E. French, "Dublin 1160-1200: Part One: Political Change and Continuity," *Dublin Historical Record* 68, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2015), 21; Bailey W. Diffie, George D. Winius, and Boyd C. Shafer, eds., *Foundations of the Portuguese Empire, 1415-1580* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1977), 60-62.

[2] Gillian T. Cell, *Newfoundland Discovered*: *English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630* (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982), 1.

[3] "Vinland," in Ian Whyte, *Environmental History and Global Change: A Dictionary of Environmental History* (I.B. Tauris: 2013); Aaron F. Miller, "Avalon and Maryland: A Comparative Historical Archaeology of the Seventeenth-Century New World Provinces of the

by which time ships from almost every western European nation sailed into Newfoundland waters every summer to exploit the plentiful cod stocks of both the offshore and inshore fisheries. Newfoundland was also the site of some of the earliest continuously inhabited colonial settlements in North America including Cupids (1610), Bristol's Hope (1618), today known as Harbour Grace, and Ferryland (1621), known then as the Colony of Avalon. Clearly, for many Europeans, especially those from northern and western Europe, the development of what came to be called 'colonial America' began with Newfoundland. Many European nations launched exploratory, economic, and settlement-oriented ventures during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, but it would be the English who would eventually come to dominate the North American continent.[4] The early English interest in the Newfoundland fishery was a major factor in stimulating the eventual push for settlement in the New World. Without the lure of the lucrative fishery, far fewer English, indeed, far fewer Europeans, would have crossed the Atlantic before the 1580s.[5]

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Newfoundland functioned as a pivotal hub for economic activity and support for colonial Europeans throughout the Atlantic basin. Despite this fact, most colonial histories ignore the island, which at best merits a brief mention simply as a fishing station or the site of failed colonies, assertions which historians, primarily regional scholars, have begun to challenge in recent decades. The first purpose of this study is to contribute to Newfoundland's ongoing integration

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Lords Baltimore, 1621-1644," (Department of Archaeology: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2013), 13.

[4] K.G. Davies and Boyd C. Shafer, eds, *The North Atlantic World in the Seventeenth Century* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1974), 80; Alan Taylor, *American Colonies: The Settling of North America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2001), xv.

[5] Davies, 11-12.

into the broader colonial historical discourse, particularly within the framework of the Atlantic perspective. Secondly, this study challenges the notion of colonial Newfoundland as 'marginal,' 'failed,' or otherwise inhospitable to settlement.

One possible explanation for the island's historical marginalization is based in its climate and relative geographic isolation. From their various places around the Atlantic basin, Europeans, Africans, and North Americans can think of Newfoundland as "up there" somewhere in what is frequently perceived as a forbiddingly cold and harsh environment. These conditions might represent sufficient proof that the label of 'failed colony' is merited.[6] There are, however, potentially more practical explanations why colonial historians have tended to overlook Newfoundland. The island's minimal presence in colonial histories could be a result of the limited amount of extant documentary evidence testifying to the conditions of colonial life in the region. Carla Pestana noted this gap more than once in her study of the Atlantic basin during the English Civil War, and the result is her marginal treatment of colonial Newfoundland. Pestana confines her coverage of Newfoundland to a cursory examination in her introductory and concluding sections.[7]

Records documenting the fishery and trade at Newfoundland are both plentiful and useful in creating a picture of the island's economic activities, trade relationships, and material culture. Yet documents specifically illuminating conventions of daily life in permanent Newfoundland settlements are relatively scarce. Because Newfoundland

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[6] Amanda Crompton, "Confronting Marginality in the North Atlantic: Archaeological and Historical Perspectives from the French Colony of Plaisance Newfoundland," *Historical Archaeology* 49, no.3 (2015): 56; Donald Holly Jr., "A Historiography of an Ahistoricity: On the Beothuk Indians," *History and Anthropology* 14, no. 2 (2003): 133.

[7] Carla Gardina Pestana, *The English Atlantic in an Age of Revolution, 1640-1661* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 91, 216.

lacked formal institutions of all sorts and because the clear majority of settlers in the seventeenth and eighteenth century were, at best, partially illiterate, the extant documentary sources include fewer personal letters or journals than a contemporaneous New England settlement might yield. Documents related to Newfoundland that have survived the colonial period mostly comprise pre-settlement propaganda tracts, colonial charters, maps, records of legal proceedings and complaints, and brief agents' reports for landed proprietors and the investors of chartered companies.[8] However, this shortfall in available sources has begun to change significantly in recent decades as the Memorial University of Newfoundland has spearheaded archaeological excavations and oral histories collections at multiple sites across the island. The recovered artifacts and accounts have helped answer a great many questions about the daily experience of settled life in colonial Newfoundland.

Part of the phenomenon of Newfoundland's traditionally marginalized coverage in history can be explained by the influence of nationalism on nineteenth and twentieth century historiography. For America's colonial inhabitants, Newfoundland was a well-known and important entrepôt for Atlantic trade and its colonies were essential nodes in the Atlantic economy. Yet, by the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, American historians seemed to have forgotten about their counterparts north of the Canadian border – a border which did not exist during the colonial period. Alan Taylor noted this enduring trend in his broad survey work of colonial North America, which is a fairly recent monograph aiming to incorporate traditionally marginalized regions and peoples

[8] William Barker, "Three Steps towards a History of the Book in Newfoundland," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of Canada* 48, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 21-2, 25-7.

outside the long-hallowed "Thirteen Colonies" of traditional American historiography.[9] Ralph Greenlee Lounsbury, one of the few early twentieth-century American historians who studied Newfoundland, dismissed the island's colonial settlements, in true exceptionalist fashion, as miserable, squalid, poor, and utterly dependent to the point of exploitation on continental colonial trade. Nineteenth-century historians before him agreed with this assessment, viewing colonial development in Newfoundland as "retarded."[10] In addition to nationalism and exceptionalism, a tendency toward hagiography also clouds the traditional American historical perspective. James and Patricia Deetz noted this phenomenon in their social history of Plymouth Colony, observing that for nationalistic historians, New England's Pilgrims presented a far more inspirational and preferable origin story than the earlier settlers of Jamestown whose primary priorities, like the first settlers of Newfoundland, were economic rather than spiritual.[11] All of these influences function to narrow and simplify historical narratives while promoting national pride and cohesion, but they tell an admittedly narrow, exclusive, and simplistic tale whose framework could not stand up to later historians' challenges.

Recent works have challenged the nationalism, exceptionalism, and hagiography which tend to characterize traditional American historiography, but the residue of these influences lingers, resulting in the persistence of continued regional marginalization.

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[9] Taylor, x-xi, xiv-xv.

[10] Ralph Greenlee Lounsbury, "Yankee Trade at Newfoundland," *The New England Quarterly* 3, no. 4 (Oct 1930): 616-618; Robert C. H. Sweeny, "What Difference Does a Mode Make? A Comparison of Two Seventeenth-Century Colonies: Canada and Newfoundland," *The William and Mary Quarterly Third Series* 63, no. 2 (April 2006): 298.

[11] James Deetz and Patricia Scott Deetz, *The Times of Their Lives: Life, Love, and Death in Plymouth Colony* (New York: W.H. Freeman, 2000), xiii, 10-11.

Pestana and Taylor each sought, and to a large extent achieved, a greater inclusivity in their coverage of colonial North America. Yet, Newfoundland remains peripheral and virtually unexplored as a colony in both their works. Taylor mentions Newfoundland, a crucial hub in the Atlantic basin, only nine times in nearly five hundred pages of text, and does so mostly in passing.[12]

This tendency to overlook Newfoundland is not the sole province of American historians. The few British and Commonwealth historians who devoted any study to colonial Newfoundland were mostly interested in the island not for its own sake, but as a test case for a particular thesis, such as might concern Britain's treatment of its colonies.[13] Others documented Newfoundland's economic importance to Britain but overlooked or dismissed the island's settlements. British historian K.G. Davies' 1974 work, *The North Atlantic World in the Seventeenth Century*, emphasizes Newfoundland's importance in stimulating greater European interest in transatlantic ventures, as well as the impressive economic benefit gleaned from the island's fishery. However, Newfoundland disappears from the narrative by chapter two - once intense discussion of colonial North American settlement begins. In Davies' work, Newfoundland is presented as little more than a fishing station, albeit a lucrative one.[14]

Even Canadian scholars have tended to marginalize Newfoundland in their historical coverage of the period. In 1949, Newfoundland, one of the oldest and few remaining British colonies, became the tenth and final province to join Canada, a decision which inspired ongoing resentment and recrimination for many of the island's

[12] Taylor, 522.

[13] Keith Matthews, "Historical Fence-Building: A Critique of the Historiography of Newfoundland" (1978), *Newfoundland Studies* 17, no. 2 (Fall 2001): 160-61.

[14] Davies, 3-16, 156-58.

people. A sense of disconnectedness, both civic and cultural, remained a familiar condition between Newfoundlanders and mainland Canada for decades afterwards. This is one possible explanation for why the island also tends to disappear from Canadian narratives of colonial history. Newfoundland's marginalization within Canada's colonial history is a particularly odd development considering that Newfoundland represented the most important component of all European economic activity in Atlantic Canada for three centuries, though it remained a British colony.[15] A region or people either hostile or indifferent to Canadian nationalism does not quite fit into a historical narrative predicated on the promotion of nationalist feelings – a concept that Quebecers and most particularly First Nations Canadians are also intimately familiar with. In a magazine article written as late as 2003, Bert den Boggende recognized the immense strategic and economic importance of Newfoundland to the colonial Atlantic but describes its colonies as failed and "poor." Yet if we accept den Boggende's characterization, we are left to wonder why plundering the settlement at St. John's proved to be such a profitable enterprise for the mid-seventeenth-century Dutch privateers whose attack he documented.[16] Published just five years later in 2008, John G. Reid's *Essays on Northeastern North America* recognized how American exceptionalism and Canadian regionalism had marginalized coverage of the Canadian Maritimes in colonial histories. Yet despite his clear

[15] J.K. Hiller, "Why Did Confederation Win? Or Why Did the Anti-Confederates Lose?" (1997), Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Website, retrieved 8 September, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/politics/win-lose-confederation.php; Peter Pope, "Modernization on Hold: The Traditional Character of the Newfoundland Cod Fishery in the Seventeenth Century," *International Journal of Maritime History* 15, no. 2 (2003): 234.

[16] Bert den Boggende, "Raid on St. John's," *The Beaver: Exploring Canada's History* 83, no. 5 (Oct.-Nov. 2003): 23-4.

recognition of Newfoundland's military, economic, and strategic importance for the entire region, the island remained as marginal in his study as it does in others.[17]

The advent of the 'Atlantic' framework, with its marked emphasis on economic and cultural interconnectivity and interdependence, seems to provide a ready and ideal niche for a more thorough exploration of colonial Newfoundland, as well as for its re-integration into the broader North American historical discourse. April Lee Hatfield places her recent monograph about the impact of intercolonial trade relationships, *Atlantic Virginia*, squarely within the Atlantic paradigm, and laments the fact that historians continue to pursue local colonial studies as if the region under examination simply existed alongside others in the Atlantic basin without also being intricately connected to them.[18] Despite the significance and duration of colonial trade connections between the Chesapeake and Newfoundland however, the island is not mentioned at all in Hatfield's study. Despite the shift in thinking which the Atlantic perspective has wrought, the broad focus of this framework has largely failed to encompass Newfoundland and it has been left to local and regional historians to articulate the island's crucial position, even its very presence, in the colonial Atlantic.[19]

Beyond the economic and cultural interconnectedness of the Atlantic basin, another factor serves to link various colonies to one another: the people who lived in them, who journeyed to them, founded them, settled in them, and worked in them. Relatively few European individuals were truly instrumental in spearheading the

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[17] John G. Reid, *Essays on Northeastern North America, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 10-12.

[18] April Lee Hatfield, *Atlantic Virginia: Intercolonial Relations in the Seventeenth Century* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 2.

[19] Jerry Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals: Law, Custom, and Naval Government in Newfoundland, 1699-1832* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 5.

establishment of colonies or outposts of European economic activity during the seventeenth century. In some cases, a single individual, like John Smith, Sir William Alexander, Sir Ferdinando Gorges, and Samuel de Champlain, or a notable family might be involved in multiple exploration, settlement, or trading ventures. English families of note include those of Sir George Calvert and Sir David Kirke, both early facilitators of European settlement in multiple North American regions. Both of these Englishmen and their families developed and governed more than one colony on the continent during the seventeenth century. Kirke held and managed interests in New France before receiving a royal charter and proprietorship from King Charles I for the region of Ferryland in Newfoundland. Calvert was the first to establish settlement at Ferryland under the previous king, James I, but later founded the continental colony of Maryland which his sons developed after Sir George's death. Calvert also established colonial holdings in Ireland, an earlier example of English expansion, and was an original investor in both the Virginia and East India Companies.[20] The forgotten colonial history of the seventeenth-century Atlantic basin is one of shared origins. Yet, historically significant personages which more prominently documented colonies share with Newfoundland does not result in the island's further integration into the broader narrative.

Newfoundland likely saw more total arrivals during the colonial period than most other colonies until the eighteenth century and could arguably be called one of the most significant points of entry to North America. Numerous historical figures of significance to American, Canadian, and British histories made landfall at Newfoundland, some simply passing through on their way east to Europe, south to the continental colonies or

[20] Davies, 41-2; John D. Krugler, *English & Catholic*: *The Lords Baltimore in the Seventeenth Century* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), iv-x.

the Caribbean, further west up the St. Lawrence to Quebec, or to trading posts beyond. Some came to the island to exploit the fishery or to help establish early settlements. K.G. Davies discusses George Calvert in reference to the founding of Maryland, even though Calvert never set foot there. However, Calvert's decade of enormous efforts and reputed investment of as much as £20,000 at Newfoundland is not mentioned at all. Davies also discusses David Kirke's colonial adventures and setbacks in Quebec without any mention of his extraordinary success as a merchant proprietor in Ferryland, where his profits for a single trading voyage, several of which he launched annually, might exceed £600. Both Davies and Taylor devoted significant attention to early French Canada in their books, even though the "English Shore" of Newfoundland alone had a European population comparable in size to Quebec or greater, until the second half of the seventeenth century.[21]

Another fascinating intercolonial connection pertains to one of the most famous figures from early New England history. Tisquantum, also known to many history students as "Squanto," is well-known in American history as the bilingual interpreter who helped establish friendly relations between the first Plymouth settlers and Chief

[21] Davies, 38, 41-2; Taylor, 91-116; Peter Pope, *Fish into Wine*: *The Newfoundland Plantation in the Seventeenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 200-201; Sweeny, 294; Cecil Calvert, "Extract from Libel [in Baltimore vs. David Kirke]," Great Britain, PRO, High Court of Admiralty, HCA 24/110 (329), MHA 16-B-5-020, in Gillian T. Cell, ed., *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization: 1610-1630*, 298-99 (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982), retrieved on 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/cecil-calvert-extract-libel-1651.php; George Calvert, "Letter to King Charles I," Great Britain, PRO, Colonial Office, CO 1/5 (27), 75, MHA 16-B-2-011, transcribed by Peter E. Pope, retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/george-calvert-letter-1629.php; David Kirke and Nicholas Shapley, "Invoice of Goods Shipped Aboard the *David* of Ferryland," in James P. Baxter, ed., *Documentary History of the State of Maine*, vol. 6, *The Baxter Manuscripts* (Portland, Maine, 1900): 2-4, revised by Peter E. Pope, retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/kirke-shapley-invoice-1648.php.

Massasoit. John Demos and James and Patricia Deetz referenced Squanto in their respective social histories of Plymouth. His fascinating experiences of Atlantic exploration, his harrowing kidnapping by English captain, George Weymouth, his sale as a slave in Spain, and his eventual arrival in London makes Tisquantum a living example of the interconnected colonial Atlantic. It is possible that he may also have been one of the five Native Americans brought to London by Captain George Weymouth on behalf of Ferdinando Gorges, whose interest in colonial settlement in New England was sharpened by his interactions with his "guests." Deetz and Deetz relate how Tisquantum, upon arrival in London, was taken into the household of John Slanie, although historian Jace Weaver suggests he may have been indentured to the Englishman. Slanie was treasurer of the Newfoundland Company, which established the Cupids settlement in Conception Bay, Newfoundland. Deetz and Deetz report that Slanie introduced his Wampanoag "guest" to one Captain Thomas Dermer, with whom he sailed for the North American continent once again in 1618. But left unmentioned is the period which Tisquantum spent in the Cupids settlement itself.

Deetz and Deetz report that Tisquantum took passage back to "New England" with Dermer in 1618 where he "jumped ship" and headed home. In fact, he actually spent an indeterminate amount of time in Cupids, perhaps months, perhaps a year, as companion and advisor to the settlement's governor and eventual founder of the Maine colony of Piscataqua, John Mason. Tisquantum also knew John Smith and had helped him to scout the New England coastline in 1614 for the best location to establish a colony. In fact, during the voyage to found Plymouth, the *Mayflower* passengers used the map Smith had created of New England during his explorations with his well-traveled

indigenous companion.[22] Truly, Tisquantum's life exemplified just what a small and interconnected world the colonial Atlantic basin really was, and not just for Europeans.

Proponents of the Atlantic perspective now write more readily of the "red" or "black" Atlantic during the colonial period, increasing the perspective of the ocean as a connecting highway between Europe, Africa, and the Americas rather than a barrier to those who lived in its various "peripheries." It is worth noting that the kinds of connections between peoples and regions which the life of Tisquantum represents are fairly common in early colonial America, providing support for the argument in favor of a holistic 'Atlantic' perspective. David Kirke and Samuel de Champlain knew each other well from their time together at Quebec, as companions and later as rivals for control of the colony. Kirke and Massachusetts governor, John Winthrop, knew one another well also. One fascinating encounter between the two occurred when their ships literally "bumped" into each other at sea off the Newfoundland coast, where they and their crews stopped to speak to one another and exchange a few gifts.[23] Despite the many, close, and interesting connections between the island and the rest of the Atlantic, it remains marginal or nonexistent in most colonial historical works. And when Newfoundland

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[22] John Demos, *A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 5; Deetz and Deetz, 61-65, 71; Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 79; Jace Weaver, *The Red Atlantic*: *American Indigenes and the Making of the Modern World, 1000-1927* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 57-60; "The Signatories: Gorges," Pilgrim Hall Museum, Plymouth, Massachusetts: 2, retrieved 16 August, 2021. https://pilgrimhall.org/pdf/The_signatories_Gorges.pdf; William Bradford, *Bradford's History: "Of Plimoth Plantation"* (1651) (Boston: Wright & Potter Printing Co., 1898), electronic version prepared by Dr. Ted Hildebrandt, Gordon College, Wenham, MA, March 1, 2002: 186-89, 121, retrieved 25 August, 2021. http://faculty.gordon.edu/hu/bi/ted_hildebrandt/nereligioushistory/bradford-plimoth/bradford-plymouthplantation.pdf.

[23] Deetz, 71; Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 79.

does enter the conversation, the lucrative fishery is usually mentioned but the island's settlements either go unexamined or are generally depicted as colonial 'failures.'

By what standards might historians reckon colonies to have failed? The deep cultural entrenchment of Whiggish notions of continuous progress and modernity suggests that population growth and perceived economic prosperity might carry a lot of weight in estimations of colonial success or failure, particularly for nineteenth and twentieth-century historians of North America. Unfortunately, Newfoundland's pattern of settlement makes determining actual resident populations exceedingly difficult. They also give one the impression that the concept of a resident population needs to be modified to fit the realities of the colonial period.

Scholars have posited a permanent resident European population of approximately two hundred in Newfoundland by 1640, certainly a miniscule figure compared to estimates of more than twelve thousand in Massachusetts, over ten thousand in Barbados, and above eight thousand in Virginia.[24] Yet, these figures all presuppose a certain amount of permanence which may have been notably tenuous, particularly during the first half of the seventeenth century, and not just in Newfoundland but throughout the colonies of the Atlantic basin. The earliest European settlements in North America tended to be economic outposts rather than settled communities, and there remained a sense of impermanence even within the populous New England, Chesapeake, and Caribbean communities, with frequent settler turnover, intercolonial migration, and return voyages to Europe.[25]

[24] Pestana, 229.
[25] Reid, 34, 54; Davies, 329; Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 224-31.

That being said, it is worth noting that Newfoundland settlements, in general, showed a consistently lower settler household turnover rate during the second half of the seventeenth century, between 32% and 39% in the settlements along the island's English Shore, than several counties in the New England and Chesapeake regions. In Massachusetts, the towns of Rowley and Dedham showed a settler turnover rate of between 41% and 48% between 1643 and 1660. Windsor, Connecticut showed a similar pattern with 43% in the 1670s and 1680s. In Boston, 47% of those surveyed disappeared from subsequent censuses during the 1680s and 1690s. In the Chesapeake where mortality rates were much greater and could thus be considered a more significant contributing factor to the disappearance of households from census data over time, the percentages were even more pronounced. In Charles County and Surry County, Maryland, turnover ranged from 53% to 58% between 1660 and 1678, while in Lancaster County, Virginia, between 55% and 61% of settler households disappeared from census data between collections taken from 1669 through 1698. However, some individual towns, like Dedham, Massachusetts, impressively bucked this widespread colonial trend with an exceptionally low turnover rate of between 22% and 27% between 1660 and 1690.[26] Despite their historical reputation for transience among their population, early Newfoundland settlements actually showed a greater tendency towards permanence than other Atlantic colonies. In addition to the undeniable evidence of wanderlust, if not mortality, in the seventeenth-century Atlantic, spatial considerations also constrained population increases in colonial settlements.

[26] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 228-29.

The economic activities of most colonies limited the growth of concentrated settlement in general because of the extensive acreage required to produce tobacco, sugar, rice, or whatever the staple commodity happened to be in a given region. Newfoundland was in the same boat, so to speak. The inshore fisheries required significant lengths of shore space along the limited island coastline in order to set up the production apparatus required to make dried cod; the result was numerous, fairly small, and far-flung settlements.[27] Newfoundland's "settled" population in 1640 was dwarfed by its seasonal "migrant" population. Records indicate that throughout the seventeenth century, the seasonal fishery drew three hundred or more English ships per year to Newfoundland.[28] During the decades leading to the English Civil War, the English fishery may have employed as few as five thousand and as many as twenty thousand people per season. With a total European population of little more than fifty thousand in the New World by 1640, it is therefore conceivable that at times, the European summer population of Newfoundland might have dwarfed that of most, if not all other colonies during the first half of the century.

These highly mobile workers came primarily from the English West Country during the seventeenth century, and in the eighteenth, increasingly, from southern Ireland.[29] The fishing season lasted roughly from May through September. This means that migratory fishermen, or "by-boat-keepers" as seasonal fishermen who owned their own boats and equipment on the island were called, might spend as much time in Newfoundland as in Europe throughout their professional lives. This makes the process

[27] Miller, "Avalon and Maryland," 390.

[28] Gillian T. Cell, *English Enterprise in Newfoundland*: *1577-1660* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969), location 1812.

[29] Sweeny, 295; Pestana, 229.

of deciding exactly who qualifies as a resident much more complex. Furthermore, without any collection of census data at Newfoundland prior to the 1670s and with multiple communities in hidden coves and harbors along the twisting coastline frequently overlooked in subsequent census collections, it is difficult to judge just how much of the overwintering population went completely undocumented.[30] Other factors which complicate the process of determining residency in Newfoundland include census data-collection practices, differing or contradictory census data, the status mobility of Newfoundland inhabitants, and assumptions about their transience.

Most census-takers only noted the names of planter heads of household in the surveyed regions, although some also tended to count unnamed wives and children. Women, most often the widows of planters, were named if they were heads of household. Some censuses may not have counted servants, believing them to be transient rather than resident. Some individuals might appear in an earlier census but disappear from a subsequent one because of a status change, such as a loss of prosperity in which a planter became a servant. In this case, the person would still be resident but not enumerated, therefore contributing to an assumption of transience. A widow named as a head of household in an earlier census might not appear in a subsequent one because she had remarried. Her husband would therefore be the head of household and she and her children might be counted but not named.

Two data collectors sometimes surveyed the same area and recorded significantly different results. St. John's, the island's capital, is an excellent example, as it was one of the most visited sites for migratory fishermen during the sixteenth century and the date of

[30] Cell, *English Enterprise in Newfoundland*, location 199; Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 197-99.

establishment is uncertain as far as residency or permanent settlement is concerned. Late seventeenth-century planter Thomas Oxford claimed that his family had established a plantation at St. John's in 1610, and documentary sources do record the presence of plantations and houses built around the harbor in the mid-1620s. In Sir Robert Robinson's 1680 census, twenty-eight "planters and inhabitants" are enumerated as resident at St. John's. Twenty-three of them claimed to have resided there in 1675, however Sir John Berry's study of that year recorded only twelve of those twenty-three enumerated in 1680. In 1669, the surgeon James Yonge recorded only five of the names mentioned in Berry's study. Yet another contemporary report estimates that "fifty or sixty families" were resident at St. John's during this period. It is entirely possible that the differences among these figures might hinge on whom different surveyors and observers felt was worth enumerating, depending on their perceived status.

It is also worth noting that while Newfoundland residents could be just as 'mobile' as colonial residents elsewhere, they also regularly displayed impressive longevity of settlement. Robinson's 1680 census reported that out of twenty-eight inhabitants surveyed at St. John's, only four had been resident for less than four years. The mean period of residency was about fifteen years, and those who had been resident longest - more than thirty years - included three enumerated individuals who claimed to have been born in St. John's. One of the most extraordinary examples of Newfoundland settlement longevity is the family of Thomas Hefford of New Perlican in Trinity Bay, first enumerated in the 1675 census. Archaeologists and historians investigating his plantation found Hefford's descendants still living in the neighborhood more than three centuries later, an impressive example in the context of Europeans in North America.

With all these considerations in mind, it is possible that the perceived transience of colonial Newfoundlanders has been too easily accepted as evidence of the supposed marginality or failure of settlement, especially regarding working-class fishing servants.[31]

During the seventeenth century, roughly 10% of England's population was similarly transient. They migrated annually or seasonally for employment in agricultural and animal husbandry, spending no more than a year in a single household. Many West Country fishing servants came from this pool of perennially migratory laborers during the seventeenth century. Historian Peter Pope noted that their residency patterns tended to fall within the normal range of behavior for working-class people within the broader Atlantic basin. Their annual absence from their home counties during the work season seems no reason to exclude them from the resident English population. Therefore, there should be no reason to suppose that a servant who spent a season or any number of years working in Newfoundland before returning home or moving on to another colony was a transient rather than a resident. These considerations make the argument for colonial Newfoundland's marginality with regard to population much more difficult to substantiate.[32]

Like elsewhere in the colonial world, settlement proceeded slowly but did increase over time, hardly constituting the traditional picture of a colonial failure or non-starter. Approximately two thousand year-round European residents were living at Newfoundland by the turn of the eighteenth century, six thousand by mid-century, twelve thousand by the American Revolution, and forty thousand by the end of the Napoleonic Wars. In 2021, the Canadian province of Newfoundland and Labrador is home to a little

[31] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 53, 220-225.
[32] Ibid., 221-25.

over half a million people. Considering the limited island coastline along which the bulk of the European population has always been concentrated and the broad swathes of island interior remaining uninhabited, even as late as the nineteenth century, this level of population growth, through both natural increase and immigration, is fairly respectable.[33]

Historians who reckon Newfoundland an economically failed colony must purposely ignore the enormous annual volume and value of the colonial cod fishery. The estimated average annual transatlantic live catch through most of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was about two hundred thousand tons, with the English fishery at Newfoundland alone producing a little more than a third of that during the greatest periods of prosperity, about seventy-five thousand tons. At roughly ten to twelve shillings per quintal (1 quintal=112 lbs.) of dried fish, which was what cod fetched during its most lucrative periods, the English fishery at Newfoundland was worth hundreds of thousands of pounds annually to English fishermen and merchants. Without comprehensive financial records, it is difficult to estimate the true value of the English fishery from year to year, especially considering that the fishery remained open to exploitation by multiple European nations and catches varied annually. However, simple mathematics tells us that seventy-five thousand tons of cod at ten shillings per quintal equals annual gross revenues exceeding £735,000.[34] While this is an admittedly rough calculation, it notably exceeds the total annual English profits on sugar for the year 1686, even though historians have typically considered sugar to have been the most lucrative colonial Atlantic product. Further, this rough calculation does not account for the

[33] Sweeny, 295; Statistics Canada, "Quarterly Population – Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1971-2021," retrieved 20 August 2021. https://stats.gov.nl.ca/Statistics/Topics/population/PDF/Quarterly_Pop_Prov.pdf.

[34] Pope, "Modernization on Hold," 235, 249.

revenues realized from "wet" or "green" fish, produced more quickly and in a more economical fashion than the dry cure, and which could be processed quickly onboard a fishing ship rather than laboriously on shore. Neither does this calculation account for profits made from "train" oil, derived from cod livers and used as a lubricant for machinery. The Newfoundland trade was not only Britain's oldest non-imperial export trade but also remained for centuries the most lucrative, surpassed only by the profits of the eighteenth-century slave trade and the nineteenth century opium trade.[35]

Despite the financial rewards of European colonization, in reality, few colonies in the Atlantic basin approached stable population growth or managed to develop a self-sustaining economy which did not depend upon supplies from Europe until the eighteenth century, a fact which does much to counter claims of colonial 'failure' in seventeenth-century Newfoundland.[36] Sir George Calvert's family departed their colony at Ferryland only a few years after its establishment but considered their experience instructive rather than 'failed.' Moreover, while the family left the colony, they continued to collect imposts and rents via their agents both prior to and following Sir David Kirke's control of the colony. A failed enterprise does not continue paying dividends to its investors, even though it probably made little difference to the cash-strapped Cecil Calvert at the time. Aaron Miller notes that the early histories of Avalon and of Maryland, also established by the Calvert family, form a single cohesive narrative of the learning process involved in establishing a colonial settlement in the seventeenth-century Atlantic.[37] Ferryland may have proven to be a temporary economic failure for George Calvert but the settlement

[35] Sweeny, 297; Taylor, 205.
[36] Pestana, 14.
[37] Miller, "Avalon and Maryland," 51-2, 380.

remained continuously inhabited after Calvert's departure. The settlement would eventually achieve the kind of success originally sought by colonial proprietors under David Kirke who simply occupied the environment and infrastructure pioneered by Calvert, making it work for him within a mercantile rather than a corporate system.[38]

Newfoundland occupied an advantageous geographic position in the Atlantic, a fact not lost on colonial promoters and propagandists like Edward Hayes and Anthony Parkhurst, who began advocating for Newfoundland settlement as early as the 1570s. The increasing threat of Spanish naval might in the years before the Armada convinced many of the immense strategic advantages which a permanent English presence at Newfoundland might bring. Seeking both to monopolize the fishing trade and secure for England the nearest gateway to North America from western Europe, English mariners began to harry and rob Iberian ships at Newfoundland's inshore fishing grounds in the early 1580s, just as they sought to interrupt Spanish shipping through piracy elsewhere in the North Atlantic. As war with Spain became a certainty, Queen Elizabeth's Secretary of State and Lord Privy Seal, Sir William Cecil, saw the value in intensifying the English presence in Newfoundland, and he used the machinery of the state to encourage the development of the fishery as a "nursery for seamen." The Newfoundland industry would, theoretically, produce a continuous supply of fresh recruits for the navy, as well as a source of healthy annual profit without any draining away of English bullion. The English fishing fleet grew from a small handful of West Country merchant ships making

[38] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 143; Simon Stock, "Letter to Propaganda Fide," Archives Propaganda Fide, SOCG, vol. 100, 263rv, B:f.266r, in Luca Codignola, ed., *The Coldest Harbour of the Land: Simon Stock and Lord Baltimore's Colony in Newfoundland, 1621-1649*, trans. Anita Weston (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), 121-22, retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/simon-stock-letter-1631.php.

annual voyages during the 1570s, to a fleet of at least two hundred and fifty distributed across many more English ports by 1615.[39]

Paradoxically, war with Spain actually facilitated the growth of the English fish trade to the Iberian Peninsula. With the crippling of Spanish, Basque, and Portuguese fishing interests at Newfoundland, partly because of English piracy and partly because of the imposition of heavier Spanish taxes on the Basque and Portuguese regions and their fisheries, the price of fish rose and the English gained a virtual monopoly over dried cod. England became the primary supplier to both the military and civilian populations of huge swathes of Catholic Europe where demand for dried fish was much greater than in Protestant England despite Queen Elizabeth's addition of more "fish days" to the Anglican religious calendar to support the Newfoundland trade. Dried cod was a valuable commodity to the Spanish, especially during wartime when all ships were mobilized for military service and could not be spared for fishing, and when the need for a stable and durable protein source was greatest. If cured well and stored properly, dried cod will keep for years. English voyages to Newfoundland began increasingly to take on a triangular pattern, with ships heading to Newfoundland largely in ballast with minimal investment, extracting and processing huge amounts of fish and train oil, voyaging then to southern Europe to trade for Iberian and Mediterranean wine, oil, fruits, silver, and other commodities before their voyage home. A century later, as the trade in African slaves became more pronounced, the dried cod produced at Newfoundland became a staple food for the enslaved laborers of the Caribbean and perhaps also the Chesapeake region and the Carolinas, for which southern planters would trade sugar, molasses, rice,

[39] Cell, *English Enterprise in Newfoundland*, location 1-11, 89, 111.

and tobacco. Besides Newfoundland fish, they might also take in exchange European goods traded through Newfoundland, or bills of exchange on London.

The Devonshire-born merchant seaman and fishing master, Richard Whitbourne, anticipated and quite accurately visualized the interconnectivity and interdependence which would come to characterize the colonial Atlantic in his *Discourse and Discovery of New-found-land*, published in 1620. Whitbourne understood that a permanent English presence at Newfoundland would serve as a hub of military and trade support between Europe, mainland North America, and the Caribbean. Further, he anticipated that a continuous presence would allow them to levy a tax on all other European inshore fishing interests in the region, as well as profit from all those ships constantly coming into Newfoundland ports for supplies mid-voyage. All these factors serve to transform the image of colonial Newfoundland from a simple 'fishing station' to a crucial node in the Atlantic economy.[40]

With all these considerations in mind, the labels failed or "marginal" seem somewhat incongruous when applied to colonial Newfoundland. As well as encouraging the island's re-integration into the broader colonial historical narrative, this study argues that the experience of permanent European settlement in seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century Newfoundland was not that of an inhospitable or failing colony but, in fact, fairly comparable to contemporaneous settlement elsewhere in North America, and in some ways, more advantageous for those highly mobile Europeans who lacked the

[40]Ibid., location 618, 632, 658, 869, 993; Cell, *Newfoundland Discovered*, 26-31; Gaelle Dieufelet, "The Isle aux Morts Shipwreck: A Contribution to Seventeenth-Century Material Culture in Newfoundland," *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 33, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 146, 152; Joshua Tavenor, "Imports to Newfoundland in the Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries," *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 26, no. 1 (Spring 2011): 75-6; Lounsbury, 609, 611, 613-14; Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 27, 242.

benefits of birth, education, or the means to acquire land - the working class, for lack of a better term appropriate to a period prior to the advent of industrial capitalism. Working-class Europeans who braved the transatlantic crossing during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries might have found that working and/or settling in Newfoundland was as advantageous, if not more so, than the Caribbean, the Chesapeake, and sometimes even New England, particularly regarding economic stability, access to opportunity, physical health and safety, gender equity, and personal liberty.

This project will address each of these areas of comparison and advantage in chapters three through six, examining experiences of life in seventeenth-century, eighteenth-century, and early nineteenth-century colonial Newfoundland compared with regions further south on the western edge of the Atlantic basin. New France, Acadia, and Plaisance will also periodically enter the discussion. However, because of the predominantly English character of colonial American settlement in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Newfoundland will chiefly be compared to other English colonies.

Chapter two will closely examine Newfoundland historiography with reference to the 'conflict thesis.' Widely popularized by D.W. Prowse at the end of the nineteenth century, although the framework significantly predates him, the conflict thesis states that struggles between migratory and settlement-based fishing interests were mainly responsible for the "retardation" of permanent settlement in Newfoundland. The endurance of the conflict thesis goes a long way toward explaining why historians have continued to accept the notion of Newfoundland's marginality or colonial failure.

Chapter three will discuss the economic stability and access to opportunity in Newfoundland which matched, and in some cases exceeded, that of other contemporaneous colonies.

Chapter four will investigate and compare the physical health and safety of settlers in Newfoundland compared with other colonies in the Atlantic basin.

Chapter five will explore the experiences of women in colonial Newfoundland who, in some ways, found their experience comparable to their counterparts throughout the New World, and in others, more advantageous.

Chapter six will discuss how the relative dearth of formal institutions in Newfoundland may have contributed to a type of personal liberty unfamiliar to many colonists elsewhere in the Atlantic world.

Chapter seven will comprise a brief conclusion and an overall summary of how studies of Newfoundland might contribute to an enrichment of Canadian, American, and Atlantic historical discourses. Additionally, this section will identify areas for further research and integration of colonial Newfoundland into the broader Atlantic colonial narrative. Finally, it will reflect on the conditions of colonial Newfoundland as an interesting model of the kind of liberty, independence, and self-determination with which most nationalist North American historians romantically imbued their own narratives. For this interesting cultural and philosophical connection, if for nothing else, greater coverage and integration of Newfoundland within colonial narratives is both a worthwhile and interesting goal for historians.

CHAPTER II

NEWFOUNDLAND HISTORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY

The dominant narrative within Newfoundland historiography, the "conflict thesis," states that struggles between migratory and settlement-based fishing interests were primarily responsible for the "retardation" of permanent settlement in Newfoundland. Scholars widely accepted this theory and it became historical orthodoxy, remaining unchallenged until the 1970s. Indeed, the conflict thesis remains the dominant narrative of Newfoundland history within the popular public consciousness of the province, with historiographic critiques penetrating only minimally beyond the academic community. This historiographic tradition provides yet another plausible explanation for the origin of Newfoundland's marginalization in colonial narratives. If many agree that the island's settlement and development process was "retarded" during the colonial period relative to other Atlantic colonies, then historical coverage of colonial Newfoundland becomes easy to dismiss as unimportant. But aside from this, the conflict thesis also serves an important social need in the region. It confers a sense of cultural unity and nationalism particularly because it emphasizes the humble, plucky, hardworking Newfoundlander's struggle against the greed of merchants and commercial interests with considerable influence in the imperial center. The work of Newfoundland historians and archaeologists during the last half-century has done a great deal to

deconstruct the conflict thesis and to shed new light on the island's earliest European settlements, conclusively demonstrating that despite the existence of competition, settled and migratory interests were interdependent and mutually beneficial. Despite some conflict over access to the fishery and some imperial opposition to permanent settlement, the population of overwintering residents continued to expand steadily in Newfoundland throughout the colonial period nonetheless. These conclusions help to deconstruct notions of the marginality of the island's settlements, making further investigation and study of those settlements more worthwhile than ever.

Magistrate, legal scholar, and Newfoundland's first chief justice, John Reeves first articulated the conflict thesis in his book, *History of the Government of the Island of Newfoundland*, published in 1793. Reeves' experience of Newfoundland almost certainly guided the formation of his views. As a jurist, he was invariably confronted daily by clash and conflict. When disputes arose between planters and migrants, merchants and fishermen, or servants and their employers, it was up to judges and magistrates to adjudicate.[41] The opening lines of Reeves' book established an historical dogma for the next two centuries:

> I intend to give a short history of the Government and Constitution of the island of Newfoundland. This will comprise the struggles and vicissitudes of two contending interests - The planters and inhabitants on the one hand, who, being settled there, needed the protection of a government and police, with the administration of justice: and the adventurers and merchants on the other; who, originally carrying on the fishery from this country, and visiting that island only for the season, needed no such protection for themselves, and had various reasons for preventing its being afforded to others.[42]

[41] Jerry Bannister, "Whigs and Nationalists: The Legacy of Judge Prowse's 'History of Newfoundland,'" *Acadiensis* 32, no. 1 (Autumn 2002): 87.

[42] John Reeves, *History of the Government of the Island of Newfoundland* (1793) (Prabhat Books, 2008), 14.

The influence of Reeves' thesis was readily apparent in the rhetoric of the liberal movement for responsible government in Newfoundland during the early nineteenth century. Prominent political reformers such as William Carson and Patrick Morris co-opted Reeves' perspective of imperial and commercial domination of the island and added a dimension of exploitation and victimization to the conflict thesis. Britain, they claimed, had too long denied measures of self-government and self-determination to residents of Newfoundland in order to continue exploiting the island's resources without competition. These campaigns eventually resulted in the creation of a colonial legislature in 1832.

In 1895, Daniel Woodley Prowse, lawyer, judge, politician, historian, and island native published his *History of Newfoundland*, undoubtedly the most influential and widely-read historical volume about the region to date. Prowse had grown up surrounded by the rhetoric of the early nineteenth-century liberal movement and viewed the colonial history of Newfoundland the same way that the reformers and John Reeves had before him. Historian Jerry Bannister notes that Prowse's Whig leanings are important to understanding why he accepted the conflict thesis without questioning it. Prowse viewed history as a journey from a state of barbarism and chaos to one of progress and modernity. His historical narrative was a linear and teleological one, highlighting Newfoundland's movement from a supposedly near-lawless frontier and exploited economic backwater to a legitimate, industrializing, self-governing Dominion. As well as clarifying the reason for his acceptance of the conflict thesis, Prowse's classical Whig ideology also explains both his Newfoundland nationalism, and his support for Confederation with Canada in 1867 – two perspectives which became somewhat more

adversarial than complementary for some Newfoundlanders as they approached the 1949 Confederation watershed. For Prowse, Confederation and nation-building were the next natural steps for Newfoundland's further development, prosperity, and progress.[43] However, the increasing distrust of government which Newfoundlanders cultivated throughout the political and economic struggles during the first half of the twentieth century further divided the region on whether to embrace Confederation with Canada or resume responsible government, this time as an independent nation.[44]

Newfoundland emerged from the First World War facing massive debts and depressed fish prices. Although significant economic and infrastructural development continued from the beginning of the War through the 1920s, including construction of the railroad and the growth of both mining and forestry, Newfoundland's government was unable to comfortably service their growing debt. When the economy collapsed with the advent of the Great Depression, the debt became crippling, absorbing all tax revenue not already committed to public relief and forcing Newfoundland to seek additional loans. World War I had added $35 million to the island's debt. By 1932, the total debt was nearly $100 million and Newfoundland confronted the very real threat of bankruptcy. Mercantile elites, increasingly nervous about the security of their assets and investments, began to advocate for an abdication of political and economic authority to a "Commission of Government" to take such matters decisively and constructively in hand.

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[43] Bannister, "Whigs and Nationalists," 88, 90-92.

[44] Jenny Higgins, "Impacts of the Collapse of Responsible Government" (2007), Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Website, retrieved 16 August 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/politics/collapse-responsible-government-impacts.php; Jeff A. Webb, "Collapse of Responsible Government, 1929-1934" (2001), Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Website, retrieved 16 August 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/politics/collapse-responsible-government.php.

Most of these colonial gentry had never approved of the popular extension of democracy in Newfoundland to begin with. Some viewed representative government as needlessly expensive and inefficient. Many distrusted the political empowerment of those without education or political experience, claiming that enfranchisement of such individuals only facilitated corruption, as politicians sought to manipulate gullible constituents, curry their favor, or buy votes outright. The local gentry, mostly based in and around St. John's, eventually gained the support of the working class by capitalizing on contemporaneous and unfortunately-timed corruption scandals in local government. The scandal involving accusations against Sir Richard Squires for the misappropriation of public funds stimulated protests, even riots, and seemed to convince the broader public that only an unelected commission, with nothing to gain or lose, could be trusted to take on the difficult tasks of both rebuilding and governing. In 1934, Newfoundland voters voluntarily abdicated responsible government, something entirely rare in colonial history.[45]

The continually reinforced notion of colonial Newfoundland's supposed backwardness, lack of development, and poor quality of life prior to the advent of responsible government had its impact on historical perspectives in the broader North American discourse. Ralph Lounsbury's work is a good example and unique among American historians during the early twentieth century, in that he devoted any significant attention or historical analysis to colonial Newfoundland. In the fall of 1930, he published an article in the *New England Quarterly* about the strong, interdependent economic ties between New England and Newfoundland during the seventeenth and

[45] Higgins, "Impacts of the Collapse of Responsible Government"; Webb, "Collapse of Responsible Government, 1929-1934."

eighteenth centuries. In this article, Lounsbury recognized the island's pivotal importance as a hub of Atlantic trade and commerce with ties not only to the continental and Caribbean colonies, but also to non-English European ports. He further remarked that "a large part of the activity of the government during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was directed toward discouraging the settlement of the island," demonstrating that he had absorbed the conflict thesis. Lounsbury had evidently also absorbed the notion of colonial Newfoundland's "retarded" development and believed it was exemplified in the island's supposedly "poor" quality of life. He emphasized the abject dependence and cycle of debt, "bordering on peonage," to which resident fishermen were subjected by the monopolies of local merchants. He described settlers' experiences of life as "debauched squalor" with terrible working and living conditions, no discernible governance, rife with alcoholism, and exhibiting a lack of reverence for religious and social conventions which would never have been tolerated in New England.[46] Conditions in Newfoundland in the 1930s, at the time of Lounsbury's active study of the region, doubtless indicated to him evidence of an ongoing pattern of stunted development. The island's fortunes would change dramatically however, in just a few short years.

The need for a commission government diminished as Newfoundland's star began to rise once again during the Second World War. The island's strategic location in the Atlantic once again brought her center-stage as far as the naval defense of North America was concerned. A great deal of investment by both the United States and Canada in Newfoundland, including the building of multiple Allied bases, had brought jobs, infrastructure, and an economic rebound for the island. Both the quality and standard of

[46] Lounsbury, 607-11, 616-19.

living improved a great deal during the War, with Newfoundlanders enjoying a more varied diet, better access to health care, and access to international media via multiple North American radio stations. By 1945, Newfoundlanders were ready to face the future and reclaim their government, but what form that government would take was yet to be decided.

Newfoundland had rejected Canada's overture of Confederation in 1867, but many considered becoming the country's tenth province a viable option after World War II. Anxiety about a possible return to the economic struggles of the post-WWI period convinced many islanders that Confederation and access to Canada's social programs would provide economic security. Independence-minded Newfoundland nationalists distrusted the notion of union with Canada, fearing that the island's interests would be subsumed into national ones. Still others favored a return to responsible government simply to place Newfoundland in a more advantageous position to negotiate with Canada or the United States over terms of union or economic partnerships. The 1948 referendum was decided in favor of Confederation by a margin of less than seven thousand votes. Nearly one hundred and fifty thousand people – about half of the population of Newfoundland and Labrador at the time – cast ballots in the historic vote, and for many years following, emotions and opinions around the decision to join Canada remained divided, even polarized.[47]

The most prominent voice in favor of Confederation with Canada after World War II ended was Joseph R. Smallwood, journalist, broadcaster, politician, and ardent Newfoundland nationalist in much the same vein as Judge Prowse before him.

[47] Higgins, "Impacts of the Collapse of Responsible Government."

Smallwood wrote extensively on Newfoundland history and Prowse's *History of Newfoundland* deeply influenced his perspective on the island's experiences during the first half of the twentieth century, and on her future prospects. He constructed the island's history in his writings according to the same pattern as Prowse, characterizing Newfoundland's journey as one from a dark age, prior to the assumption of responsible government and industrialization, to an era of modernity and enlightenment. He lionized the nineteenth-century political reformers like William Carson, comparing him to the American founding fathers with notably hagiographic overtones. Like Prowse, Smallwood viewed Confederation as the crowning event of Newfoundland's odyssey toward prosperity, and his message and views seemed to resonate with enough Newfoundlanders to get him elected the province's first premier following Confederation. "Joey" Smallwood was elected to seven consecutive terms, serving as premier of Newfoundland until 1972. During his twenty-two years in office, he ambitiously pursued the development of industrial infrastructure across the island.[48]

For nearly two centuries, some of the most prominent and influential personages in Newfoundland had absorbed and internalized the conflict thesis and it had guided their actions and responses to the island's conditions and challenges. In 1968, historian Leslie Harris published a new provincial school textbook, *Newfoundland and Labrador: A Brief History*. Used widely across the province, the text instructed an entire generation of young students in an historical curriculum which incorporated Reeves' conflict thesis with Prowse's teleological framework of progress, which Smallwood had adopted. The adversarial relations between settled and migratory interests were central to the text's

[48] Bannister, "Whigs and Nationalists," 92-3.

narrative, the reformers of the liberal movement for responsible government sufficiently glorified as national heroes, and Newfoundlanders portrayed as persevering through oppression and struggle to finally prosper under Confederation. Additionally, Harris' book takes Prowse's framework even further by presenting the struggles of the early twentieth century, including World War I, the Great Depression, and the Commission of Government, as challenges to be faced before Confederation and the means for progress could be secured, much as Prowse had positioned the colonial period as a struggle to be overcome to reach responsible government. Harris' conclusion celebrates the advances in infrastructure, resource management, quality of life, and education which came to Newfoundland following their union with Canada.[49]

The advent of Confederation resulted, among other impressive developments, in the creation of the Memorial University of Newfoundland (MUN). The 1960s and 70s were a time of great contribution from various historians and university faculty to the archival collections and the growing body of historical research of the island. The British historian Gillian Cell published *English Enterprise in Newfoundland* in 1969, a volume which conformed closely to the conflict thesis as the central narrative of the colonial history of the island, but also made excellent use of numerous documentary sources available to her in England including letters and journals from personal and archival collections, colonial propaganda pamphlets, colonial charters, and more official documents from the Colonial Office archives such as shipping records, wills, and inventories, as well as legal depositions and examinations.[50] As was the case among

[49] Ibid., 93.

[50] Cell, *English Enterprise in Newfoundland*, location 221, 597, 1364-1382, 1552; Jeff A. Webb, "Revisiting Fence-Building: Keith Matthews and Newfoundland Historiography," *The Canadian Historical Review* 91, no. 2 (June 2010): 327.

other North American and western European historians at this time, a more exacting methodology, a return to the sources, and a closer scrutiny of what they contained became much more important than it was to nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century historians who often wrote as much to entertain and inspire as to educate. More importantly, many such historians saw little wrong with editorializing or repeating unsubstantiated second-hand information from previous accounts equally unsubstantiated. While its conformity to the conflict thesis deviates from the work of most other historians of colonial Newfoundland during the last half-century, Cell's monograph remains a valuable staple for students of Newfoundland history for its conformity to the sources. Cell also published *Newfoundland Discovered* in 1982, an edited collection of primary sources related to colonial Newfoundland, making a large number of documents more easily available to those unable to visit English archives. Around the time of Cell's first publication, another British historian named Keith Matthews was recruited to develop the archives at MUN. Besides his substantial contributions to the university's collections, Matthews was the first to significantly challenge the conflict thesis and the first to coin that term.

In his doctoral dissertation, Matthews questioned the effectiveness of imperial efforts to discourage colonial settlement in Newfoundland, saying that evidence suggests that settlement had proceeded nonetheless. Some years later, in the seminal essay *Historical Fence Building*, Matthews sought to deconstruct the conflict thesis more fully, concluding that while disputes did occur between commercial and settled interests, the relations between them were decidedly more cooperative, interdependent, and mutually beneficial than previously supposed, and demonstrating that the notion of "retarded"

development because of active interference with settlement was a fallacy. In both works, Matthews championed inductive investigation of primary documents as a guiding methodology and insisted that Prowse's framework and conclusions, despite their acceptance by subsequent historians, were not actually consistent with the evidence. Like many other currents of historical study at this time, Matthews' conclusions had diverged significantly from orthodox historiography, which some academics labeled "revisionist." However, a sizeable proportion of the academic community saw merit in Matthews' conclusions, and continue to cite his work as a starting point for budding historians of Newfoundland.[51]

Multiple scholars have assimilated Matthews' historiographic critiques and built upon them since the 1970s such as Christopher English, Robert Sweeny, Peter Pope, Sean Cadigan, and Jerry Bannister. English and Bannister have both authored interesting legal histories which demonstrate that colonial Newfoundland's relative lack of formal institutions did not necessarily indicate a yawning vacuum of anarchy, corruption, or vulnerability to oppression. Instead, both have demonstrated that the systems in place functioned sufficiently to serve the population with the administration of justice, paying special attention to the judicial importance of 'custom' in Newfoundland. The frequent judicial invocation of custom and its concomitant use alongside statute and writ law suggests a more highly developed, comprehensive legal system and a longer judicial continuity than the traditional historiography suggests.[52] Sweeny and Cadigan employed

[51] Webb, "Revisiting Fence Building," 316-17, 323, 325, 327-28; Matthews, "Historical Fence Building," 160-62.

[52] Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 17-20; Christopher English, *Essays in the History of Canadian Law: Two Islands, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 5-7.

Matthews' conclusions in their examinations of Newfoundland's economic history. Sweeny highlighted the unrecognized sophistication of colonial Newfoundland's economic arrangements, characterizing it as the world's first capitalist economy to which the interdependence and cooperation between migratory and settled interests identified by Matthews was key.[53] Cadigan challenged the supposedly purposeful exploitation of fishing families in the nineteenth century with a re-evaluation of the widespread truck/credit practices among merchants and fishermen, asserting that these practices were meant to shield both parties from economic vagaries in the fishery and developed in response to mutual dependence on a single staple resource, not from an inherently oppressive venality toward fishermen to imprison them in debt.[54] Peter Pope authored a social history of seventeenth-century Newfoundland specifically to fill the scholarly void wrought by the persistence of the conflict thesis. In *Fish into Wine*, Pope explores socioeconomic arrangements in Newfoundland's early colonies which prove to be more comparable to those which existed elsewhere in the New World than traditional histories and historiography imply, but which also show Newfoundland's uniqueness – none of which would be worth exploring if one accepts the conflict thesis.[55]

Pope's history referred to the development of Newfoundland settlement as "vernacular." He does not deny that imperial authorities or investors in the migratory industry wished to control the fishery by attempting to limit the number of overwintering servants or the advance of settlement in general at various times. He stresses however, that despite these conditions, settlement proceeded nonetheless. His use of the term

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[53] Sweeny, 298-99.

[54] Sean Cadigan, *Hope and Deception in Conception Bay: Merchant-Settler Relations in Newfoundland, 1785-1855* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), xii-xiii, 15.

[55] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, v-vii, 3-4, 10.

"vernacular" stresses that these developments owed far less to directed initiatives by imperial forces or colonial proprietors and occurred mostly under local or individual initiative, meaning that Europeans, primarily from the English West Country and Ireland, made the conscious choice to settle on the island, pursue a living in the fishery, and start families.[56] Archaeological evidence demonstrates that Cupids remained continuously inhabited following the dissolution of the Newfoundland Company and the departure of most of the colonists, and is still inhabited by the descendants of fishing families today. Ferryland has been continuously inhabited since 1621, through two proprietors, a French invasion, sporadic pirate attacks, and periodically brutal winters.[57] The same can be said for the capital, St. John's, and indeed, many other towns established along the English or French shores of seventeenth-century Newfoundland.

Despite the academic community's broad acceptance of Matthews' challenge to Newfoundland's dominant historical narrative, the conflict thesis has remained central to the island public's understanding of its own history, particularly the element of exploitation/victimization by oppressive powers. Jerry Bannister notes that Canada during the 1970s saw the emergence of 'radical regionalism.' While Quebec nationalism and separatism engendered furious debate across the country, Newfoundland nationalism began to rise also, taking several different forms. One example is what scholars have dubbed "the Newfoundland Renaissance" in which a notable flowering of regional art, theater, music, and literature occurred across the province. At the same time, academics began to focus their attention on folklore, local customs, and the civil and social organization of outport culture. Much of this activity paid tribute to the island's heritage,

[56] Ibid., 44, 62.
[57] Cell, *Newfoundland Discovered*, 14; Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 4, 252-53.

facilitating a rejection of Prowse's and Smallwood's narratives which emphasized industry and technology as the hope for Newfoundland's progress. Instead of looking toward a brighter future, Newfoundlanders were now beginning to investigate an increasingly "golden" past. The province had not become the economic success that Smallwood had promised it would. It remained one of the poorest regions in Canada with consistently double-digit unemployment and a steadily increasing migratory outflow of young people. Even those well-educated and qualified found themselves unable to make a living at home. The journalist Sandra Gwyn lamented the loss of Newfoundland's heritage in its drive for industrial progress: "The old older that produced all of us…is being smashed, homogenized, and trivialized out of existence." The cultural revival is still very much alive in Newfoundland today and helps fuel the tourism industry as well as confer national pride and a collective identity amongst Newfoundlanders, a key component of which, for many, is their economic disadvantage compared to other Canadians.

Many academics understand that a rejection of Prowse's teleology does not necessarily indicate a rejection of Prowse's history itself. It continues to be one of the most widely-read and influential works of Newfoundland history. But while the Whig interpretation has mostly been dismissed, Newfoundlanders have continued to view their struggles against the Canadian government as yet more evidence of Newfoundland's continual exploitation by powerful and oppressive entities. The campaign for ownership of the island's offshore oil resources during the 1980s, and the events leading to the

disastrous cod-fishing moratorium during the 1990s were both popularly viewed as reiterations of this trend.[58]

Newfoundland almost certainly did not have the "golden" past that some have imagined. Life for colonial Newfoundland communities was hard, requiring heavy, cooperative labor and a great deal of grit against perils presented by a monostaple production economy, painfully disproportional power dynamics between employers and employees, relative isolation, minimal infrastructure, and an unpredictable and sometimes harsh climate. But all of this, to some extent, is true about life all over colonial North America during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Seen in this light, assertions of Newfoundland's marginality and colonial failure lose a good deal of impact. Yet, Newfoundlanders themselves seem to have bought into the notion of their own inferiority as an early modern civilization, seemingly seeing themselves as trapped in an unending cycle of economic struggle and an inability to either persuade more powerful forces to make changes, or to take control of the resources necessary for change. The present study aims to demonstrate that the island's post-Confederation troubles notwithstanding, colonial Newfoundland settlements experienced life in much the same way as their New World contemporaries in many respects. Further, the unique society and culture they created often provided opportunities and benefits not commonly extended to those on the lower end of class hierarchies throughout the Atlantic basin.

[58] Bannister, "Whigs and Nationalists," 96-98, 108.

CHAPTER III

ECONOMICS AND OPPORTUNITY

Economic stability and access to opportunity in colonial Newfoundland was fairly comparable to, and in some cases exceeded, that of other contemporaneous colonies. The island has a fairly short growing season and therefore has always been decidedly less agriculturally viable than more southerly regions, but the main business of Newfoundland was always fishing – an activity that required significantly less overhead than agricultural pursuits and depended on a more consistently reliable natural resource, less affected by the vagaries of meteorological and geological phenomena. This is not to say that cod stocks were not depleted at different periods, an idea that strains credulity when one considers the annual volume of the fishery, although modern scholars are more apt to cite the influence of widespread climate shifts in the periodic decline of cod stocks.[59] Whatever the cause, ecological strain periodically affected the profitability of fishing enterprises. With the addition of disputes of over shore space, conflict inevitably arose between migratory fishermen and settlers whose presence continued to increase. Neither competition nor imperial policy discouraging settlement had much effect in curtailing the growth of permanent residency in Newfoundland. Moreover, contrary to the framework of the conflict thesis, imperial interests ultimately ruled in favor of settlement when it

[59] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 33-36.

became clear that permanent residents played a key role as caretakers for the migratory industry and further facilitated the growing dominance of the English in the Newfoundland fishery. Despite periodically poor catch rates and intermittent struggles between the different branches of the industry, the price of cod remained much more stable throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries compared to other similarly lucrative and in-demand colonial products. A settler of both the wealthy and "middling" sorts could fare just as well in Newfoundland as in most of the continental colonies, and working-class people could move up economic ladders in Newfoundland more easily than elsewhere in North America. The colonial Newfoundland cod fishery has, in recent years, been referred to as 'proto-capitalist.' Peter Pope contends instead that the industry was conducted in a more traditional early modern fashion, but he does acknowledge that the mode of production, the labor differentiation, and some remuneration patterns certainly seem to approach the capitalist model.[60] However, Newfoundland's economy, strategic location, and industrial practices served to create one of the first capitalist consumer economies in which not just wealthy and "middling" colonists benefitted, but also working-class people who were able to trade their wages for consumable luxury goods unavailable or unaffordable to their social counterparts in Europe or in colonies further south. With these considerations in mind, it is difficult to accept the characterization of Newfoundland's colonies as 'failed' or 'marginal,' even though Newfoundland's monostaple economy frequently presented financial difficulties for settlers and the winters offered a much more modest subsistence than the bounty offered by a Newfoundland summer.

[60] Ibid., 191-92.

The nutritional value and remarkably stable price of cod throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries made it both a valuable commodity and a reliable medium of trade. Considering that many colonies relied on monostaple production for their primary economic success, cod proved to be a far more dependable resource to support settlement than other colonial products. With its fairly modest price per unit, cod did not have the glamor of gold and silver, nor did it have the luxurious novelty of tobacco or sugar. However, the dried cod produced by both the settled and migratory inshore fisheries was an essential source of protein, light and stable enough to be tightly packed in large amounts and shipped cheaply over long distances, and remained edible long after its initial production, for years even, provided one had the means to optimally store it. Throughout the colonial period, England derived far more economic benefit from the Newfoundland fishery than the Spanish derived from the resource wealth of both Peru and Mexico.[61]

Population increases and the loss of common lands and resources in Europe brought more widespread poverty. Grain shortages in the Mediterranean and the interruptions to the Iberian fishing industry helped keep up both the demand and the price for dried cod. The industry experienced brief price dips during the third quarters of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[62] Yet in general, unlike other high-volume colonial commodities, cod rose more or less steadily in price over the course of the seventeenth century from eight shillings per quintal to twelve shillings by the century's close.[63] Peter Pope has suggested that the fishery's economic success, in contrast to the continuously

[61] Cell, *Newfoundland Discovered*, 26.
[62] Sweeny, 296.
[63] Davies, 167-68.

unstable prices of wheat, sugar, and tobacco, may be related to the Newfoundland industry's maturity by the early seventeenth century. Much the same trading and production arrangements had been used in the Icelandic, Dutch, and Irish fishing grounds where the bulk of English fishing had been concentrated before their forays to Newfoundland. Economies built around more novel commodities with fairly new production and trading arrangements might have been somewhat shakier.[64] Modern scholars are more apt, however, to point to climate-related factors which affected all industries but might have been more arduous to cope with in predominantly agricultural areas.

The seventeenth century was the coldest in the last thousand years with multiple shifting climate trends. The particularly harsh, cold winters of the late 1620s strongly contributed to George Calvert's decision to continue his colonial experiment further south in Maryland. A brief warming trend occurred during the 1650s, followed by the return of a cooling trend, producing the bitter and arduous winters of the 1670s, 80s, and 90s. Such dramatic and unpredictable shifts in temperature undoubtedly had adverse effects upon agricultural enterprises in the more northerly colonies, and perhaps further south as well. The low temperatures also seem to have affected cod stocks at Newfoundland, but usually not for more than one to two seasons at a time, and not nearly to the extent suffered by the northern European fisheries whose more northerly fish stocks were subjected to more extreme temperatures. Storms and poor weather in the 1670s could make fishing more difficult and dangerous, and frequent summer rain during the same period complicated the dry-curing process, but these conditions varied regularly

[64] Pope, "Modernization on Hold," 249.

and significantly up and down the English Shore.[65] The fact remains that cold years at Newfoundland could not wipe out the majority of the island's seasonal catch, whereas the loss of a year's crop on most farms in entire regions of the continental colonies was a real possibility during the unpredictable, sometimes dramatic climate shifts of the seventeenth century, the mid-point of what has dubbed the "Little Ice Age." Climate change brings unexpected frost, flood, drought, insect and pest proliferation, and other phenomena which are anathema to agriculture.

Whether its general success emerged from industrial maturity, from unique market conditions at the time, or from the comparatively light impact of climate shifts on the fishery compared to agricultural industries, the fact remains that cod maintained an advantage as a monostaple resource by being practically the only commodity whose price was virtually unimpacted by overproduction. Even when the price for dried fish did fall, declining by half against agricultural prices in southern Europe during the third quarter of the seventeenth century, this actually stimulated greater demand for cod since the region remained food-insecure as far as grain went. Nutritious fish, and at a far cheaper rate than usual, was a more than tolerable substitute for the lack of cereal crops to feed Europe's poor.[66] The Newfoundland fishery therefore tended to recover fairly quickly from price dips. Tobacco and sugar, in contrast, saw steady decline in prices throughout the seventeenth century as a result of overproduction and market saturation, seriously undermining the economic stability of the Chesapeake and the Caribbean.

Caribbean sugar sold for at least £4 per hundredweight (112 pounds) or more during the first half of the seventeenth century. The English sugar colonies of Barbados,

[65] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 33-7, 124.
[66] Sweeny, 296.

Jamaica, and the Leeward Islands collectively produced around ten thousand tons or less of sugar prior to the 1660s when production levels began to accelerate. By the Restoration, prices had fallen to £2 per hundredweight, dropping to 25 shillings by the 1670s, and 16 shillings by the 1680s. By the turn of the eighteenth century, production levels had increased to around twenty-five thousand tons annually and the price of sugar had risen precipitously, but frequent European wars throughout the period pushed freight and insurance rates to much higher levels, absorbing much of the excess profit that might have been made. Moreover, England had been subsidizing its sugar colonies since the 1680s, when French competition in the Caribbean and major agricultural complications particularly in Barbados caused the few hundred elite sugar planters to demand London's support for their industry. England ceased attempting to compete in the international sugar market and continued to buy Caribbean sugar from English colonial producers through the eighteenth century, during which "muscovado" (brown sugar) sold for the absurdly inflated average price of £33 and 5 shillings per hundredweight. Meanwhile, in Amsterdam, the market price was much lower, only £23 and 3 shillings. Elites in the sugar colonies remained the richest Europeans in the Atlantic basin, but they never again saw the same level of profits they enjoyed during the early seventeenth century. Further, unlike other industry trades, these elites had to both receive continuous economic subsidies from England and use utterly unparalleled levels of slave labor to maintain their elite status.[67]

Tobacco was a valuable commodity which enriched both Caribbean and Chesapeake planters during the first few decades of the seventeenth century, fetching

[67] Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624 – 1713* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972), 196, 203-205.

about 5 shillings per pound in 1619. However, between 1620 and 1645 prices dropped by 85% and continued to decline into the 1680s. Tobacco prices were impacted by similar conditions faced by sugar producers during the seventeenth century – those of overproduction, European wars, and agricultural difficulties. Europeans had discovered early in the 1600s that tobacco could be grown in Europe, and fairly well. Local production, even in England, began to interfere with the profits of Chesapeake and Caribbean plantations quite early on. Most of the second half of the seventeenth century were hard times for tobacco planters in the Chesapeake, with particularly poor agricultural conditions during the 1660s and 1680s. As European conflict began to accelerate toward the end of the century, shipments were threatened by privateers and trade impeded by embargoes. During most of this period, there was little London could do to support the planters other than attempt to rescue market prices by persuading growers to limit production or destroy crops.[68]

One could convincingly argue that the falling prices of tobacco and sugar correlated to the marked increase in the importation of enslaved African labor during this period. The increase in slave importation was almost certainly the planters' response to a need to cut production costs as well as the conviction that slaves, in the long run, were cheaper than indentured servants.[69] Dried cod was a humble commodity, but a far more reliable one than many more glamorous products and therefore, in some ways, a more dependable resource upon which to build an economy. It was an industry that also required heavy labor, but one that flourished because it paid its laborers well. In order to facilitate the development of such an economy, the English fishery at Newfoundland

[68] Davies, 144, 146-48, 151-54.
[69] Ibid., 152, 167-68; Taylor, 153.

needed permanent settlements, many of which functioned as caretakers of the fishery's valuable infrastructure.

Still, until recognition of the good sense of these arrangements became more widespread, some West Country migratory fishermen could not help but view settlers as a potential threat to their economic interests. Between 1616 and 1620, the investors of the Newfoundland Company, who had sponsored the creation of the settlement at Cupids in Conception Bay, became embroiled in conflict with West Country merchants representing migratory fishermen. Knowing how valuable the revenues from their annual trade were to the crown, the merchants confidently appealed to the Privy Council to address their concerns. The colonists had taken all the best beach space for cod production in the area, they complained, while traditionally beach space in any harbor had always belonged to the 'first-comer' of the season. They further accused the colonists of maliciously stealing their salt, and damaging their stages, buildings, and boats to cripple their ability to compete. The Privy Council launched an investigation, in which the colonists claimed rather that the migratory fishermen had harassed them and damaged their equipment. This anecdote seems to support the conflict thesis, especially considering that the Privy Council ruled in favor of the merchants in 1618. However, only two years later, they reversed their decision, admonishing the migratory elements to develop more cooperative and genial relations with the settlers at Cupids. Newfoundland was an important economic concern for the crown, threatened not just by foreign competition but also by fairly frequent pirate attacks during the early seventeenth century. Rather than prohibiting settlement because they feared competition, they had seen the value in a permanent presence, not just to fish, but also to help secure the island

for England. The Privy Council ordered that all Newfoundland-bound English fishing ships pay a small tax toward funding the defense of English fishing grounds in the region. One must question whether the admittedly minimal official presence in Newfoundland at this early stage was at all able to enforce such a policy but clearly, the Privy Council understood, even at this early date, the economic importance of the fishery and the important part that settlers might play in it.[70]

The acknowledged importance of settlers to the Newfoundland industry is evident also in the various incarnations of the 1634 Western Charter, which represented England's seventeenth-century attempts to regulate the fishery. Amendments to the charter over time are illustrative of English authorities' eventual recognition of the mutual benefit derived from a cooperative coexistence between settled and migratory elements at Newfoundland. David Kirke's 1637 grant of a patent for Ferryland, traditionally a highly popular harbor for migratory fishermen, provided an amendment to the 1634 charter which forbade planters from settling within six miles of the shoreline, ostensibly to reduce competition with the migratory fishermen, but this clause had virtually no effect. Planters continued to reside no more than a short walk from the beach, even David Kirke who, seemingly without a qualm, moved into George Calvert's mansion house a mere "coit's cast" from the water. A 1653 amendment by the Commonwealth government repealed the six-mile rule and explicitly recognized planters'

[70] Cell, *English Enterprise in Newfoundland*, location 1800-1808; Davies, 8; Aaron F. Miller, John D. Krugler, Barry C. Gaulton, and James I. Lyttleton, "Over Shoes Over Boots: Lord Baltimore's final days in Ferryland, Newfoundland," *Journal of Early American History* 1 (2011): 6; John Guy, "Letter to John Slany," in Samuel Purchas, *His Pilgrims*, vol. 4 (1625, London, 1907), 417-18, reprinted in David B. Quinn, ed., *New American World: A Documentary History of North America to 1612*, vol. 4, *Newfoundland from Fishery to Colony: Northwest Passage Searches* (New York, 1979), 150-51, retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/john-guy-letter-1612.php.

rights to waterfront property. In 1661, the Restoration government attempted to forbid Newfoundland-going ships from transporting any passengers other than those who "intend to plant or settle there."[71] This strategy was not designed to limit settlement specifically, but was meant to limit the number of servants journeying to work in the by-boat fishery because the return of those fishing servants could not be assured. Too many unregulated servants upset the arrangement of the fishery as a 'nursery for seamen' since servants who did not return could not be recruited for the navy, at least not without coercive, expensive, and time-consuming impressment tactics.

Charles II and his council sought to resurrect the six-mile rule once again in 1671, but no attempt was made to enforce it until 1675. By then, the West Country merchants were facing intensified competition not only from settlers but also from the increased presence of French and New English ships fishing in Newfoundland waters, both of which were frequently welcomed by settler communities. Since the fifteenth century, the fishery had always been an open-access resource and though England laid claim to the inshore fishery prosecuted along the vast stretch of what became known as the "English Shore," inshore and offshore fishing at Newfoundland essentially remained an international industry throughout most of the colonial period – a fact which many settlers understood even if imperial authorities did not.

In 1675, thanks to the lobbying of a powerful faction of West Country fishing merchants, the Privy Council sent naval commodore Sir John Berry to the island to order the planters either to return to England or to relocate to other English colonies. Berry however, chose to ignore the order once given the chance to survey the situation in

[71] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 194.

Newfoundland, believing it to be both unrealistic and impractical. The Privy Council codified the six-mile rule the following year, but almost as soon as it was promulgated the Lords of Trade and Plantations, like Berry himself, began to question the wisdom of the anti-settlement policy in Newfoundland. In 1677, in response to a petition from the island's planters, the Privy Council rescinded the expulsion decree, recognized the residency rights of planters, lifted the formal prohibition on taverns in Newfoundland,[72] and permitted the unrestricted passage of fishing servants. Furthermore, they admonished migratory crews to "forbear any violence to the planters upon pretext of the saide western charter," with specific reference to the six-mile rule. While England did not grant the colonial government which the island's most prominent planters had also petitioned for, imperial recognition of their rights and status clearly demonstrated that imperial authorities favored continued settlement in Newfoundland rather than continuously seeking to "retard" it as proponents of the conflict thesis have insisted. Besides, periodic attempts to regulate the fishery had little impact on planters or servants who nonetheless made their own decisions regarding whether or not to settle.[73]

The fact that the Privy Council repeatedly and ultimately came down on the side of the colonists suggests that the claims of settlement advocates like Richard Whitbourne – that whoever controlled Newfoundland would occupy one of the most strategically advantageous positions in the Atlantic – were finally being taken seriously. For beyond controlling the richest fishery in the world, an English Newfoundland, with its closer proximity to northwestern Europe than anywhere else in North America, could serve as a

[72] Like the ban on residency, the prohibition on Newfoundland taverns likewise had little effect when imposed.

[73] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 166, 194-95, 206; English, 5.

way station and base of support for every other English colony in the Atlantic. A permanent presence in Newfoundland would not only secure success in the fishery but help facilitate the stability and success of all other colonial ventures as well. The fishery, supported by the settlements at Newfoundland, provided an affordable, high-volume, essential, and durable protein source to the Atlantic market; a secure provisioning stop for ships between northwestern Europe and the North American colonies; and a trading and communications hub that facilitated the interconnected commerce of the entire Atlantic basin.

Because of accidents of geography, ocean currents, and wind currents in the North Atlantic, many ships making the crossing from northwestern Europe sought resources in Newfoundland first, and many ships returning to northwestern Europe from the North American continent usually made Newfoundland their last stop. With favorable weather, the Newfoundland voyage from British, French, or Dutch ports took an average of five weeks during the spring and summer. Upon arrival, ships bound for the continental or Caribbean colonies would equip or further victual their ships before the next leg of their voyage. This was the pattern for virtually all northwestern European ships arriving at Newfoundland. English ships departing the east coast of Newfoundland journeyed south along the east coast of the continent toward their destinations. French ships stopped at Plaisance or other French ports on the west coast of Newfoundland for supplies before continuing up the St. Lawrence to Canada.

Following his five-week journey across the Atlantic from Falmouth in April and May of 1597, Charles Leigh stopped at Ferryland in order to repair one of his boats. He also stopped at the nearby harbor of Renews to inquire about purchasing an additional

boat, and yet again at Cape Race to wait out a storm before continuing on to Cape Breton Island. Sir William Alexander followed a similar pattern during his 1629 voyage to Cape Breton, putting in at a Newfoundland harbor first before continuing on to his final destination, even though Cape Breton is little more than a few extra days sail away from Newfoundland. Sir William's voyage also took about five weeks beginning in mid-May. He stopped in briefly at Newfoundland, though it is unclear for how long or what resources he replenished, most likely wood and water at the very least. He reported that upon embarking for Cape Breton, a sudden storm forced him to turn back toward Newfoundland temporarily, with the ship finally arriving in Cape Breton in early July.[74] In June of 1639, the *Desire* of New England, a ship which has been documented as having been previously involved in past Newfoundland fishing voyages, stopped at Fermeuse, just south of Ferryland, while *en route* to Britain, also most likely for wood and water. It is also possible that they stopped to buy fish but more commonly, ships which took on a lading of fish would head for southern Europe rather than the British Isles.[75]

Of course, other sailing routes were routinely used when embarking from northwestern European ports, such as the southwest route to the Caribbean via the trade winds to the Canaries and then westward across the Atlantic. The settlers of Jamestown followed this route, following the Gulf Stream north from the West Indies to Virginia, but

[74] Richard Hakluyt, "The voyage of Master Charles Leigh, and divers others to Cape Breton and the Isle of Ramea," in Richard Hakluyt, *The Principall Navigations of the English Nation* (London, 1600), reprinted in Richard Hakluyt, *Voyages* vol. 6 (London, 1907), 100-114, revised by Peter E. Pope, retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/richard-hakluyt-voyage-1597.php. Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 21, 80; Miller, "Avalon and Maryland," 9; Reid, 27-9.

[75] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 151.

in total, this transatlantic voyage could take four months or more and was far more perilous with longer periods exposed to open ocean and the danger of enemy European ships and privateers compared to only a month between Europe and Newfoundland before a southward journey that stuck relatively close to the eastern Atlantic seaboard. It is entirely conceivable that these advantages might have drawn more ships sailing from western Europe toward the more northerly crossing and increased the presence of international visitors to Newfoundland, thus facilitating the island's function as an essential Atlantic hub.[76]

Newfoundland ports were seething hives of activity during the spring and summer with merchant ships, fishing ships, sack ships, and resident fishermen all plying their various trades. The trade in goods through Newfoundland connected the island to Britain, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Portugal, the Atlantic islands, the Mediterranean basin, the Caribbean, the Chesapeake, New England, and New France, thus keeping these regions connected to one another through both trade and communication. When major events occurred to impact the entire Atlantic world, mariners were invariably the first to inform distant regions. When war broke out between England and Spain in 1585, imperial authorities were quick to dispatch the news to Newfoundland to warn fishing ships not to attempt traveling to or trading with the Iberian Peninsula. When King Charles I was executed, the news spread predictably along Atlantic trade routes, first to Newfoundland, then to New England, the middle colonies, and then further south to the Chesapeake and the Caribbean, likely taking several months before the most southerly colonies became aware of the dramatic changes which had taken place within the empire.

[76] Taylor, 130.

Because of the informality of such communications, they might hear different versions of the same event, depending on who delivered the message. One can imagine the consternation of plantation owners and officials in Virginia who reported receiving contradictory orders from both the new Commonwealth government *and* the government-in-exile of King Charles II. The quality of early modern communications notwithstanding, Newfoundland's location and trade links made it an important information hub as well as one of trade. Newfoundland's trade contacts were numerous, encompassing virtually the entire Atlantic basin. The island's geographic position as the mid-point between northwestern Europe and the colonies made it an important entrepôt for goods which not only facilitated the economic success of the broader Atlantic region but provided Newfoundland settlers with distinct economic advantages.[77]

Because Newfoundland settlements had smaller year-round populations, comparable to those of more northerly colonies such as Acadia, Maine, and New France, many trade goods merely passed through Newfoundland before being exchanged and shipped elsewhere. However, the comparatively small fraction of the flow of shipped goods which were purchased by Newfoundland settlers could frequently be had at lower prices during the trading season, not only because of low shipping costs to Newfoundland but also because of the sheer volume of merchant competition on the island at such times.[78] The illegal trade in Newfoundland, carried out just before and just after the formal fishing/trading season once the naval commodores had departed, could apparently

[77] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 80, 91, 93, 201-202; David Kirke and Nicholas Shapley, "Invoice of Goods Shipped Aboard the *David* of Ferryland," retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/kirke-shapley-invoice-1648.php; Tavenor, 75-76; Pestana, 31-2.

[78] Lounsbury, 608-609; Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 159.

be just as lucrative. One of the attributes which made the island so attractive as an entrepôt for goods was the virtual absence of customs authorities at Newfoundland until the mid-eighteenth century. Many enumerated commodities which England intended only for her own markets entered illegal intercolonial markets in Newfoundland. Additionally, European goods, for which British, French, and Dutch merchants traded Newfoundland fish, were often re-exported from Europe, through Newfoundland, to the colonies, whether legally or illegally.

Wine, fruit, oil, cork, and iron came to the island from the Mediterranean, the Iberian Peninsula, the Canaries, the Azores, and Madeira via English and Dutch ships. Canvas and other textiles came from Holland and England. Silk, brandy, and wine came from France, and wheat, flour, hard bread, and biscuits from New France. From the southern colonies in the Chesapeake, Carolinas, and the Caribbean came tobacco, rice, sugar, and molasses. Chesapeake counties with poorer soil, unable to support the rich tobacco production possible between the Potomac, York, James, and Rappahannock rivers instead exported food and naval stores of great use in Newfoundland such as corn, livestock, pitch, tar, and pipe staves. New England traders bore most of the trade goods from the southern colonies to Newfoundland, and also provided valuable supplies which the island did not have the timber resources to produce at levels the continental colonies could such as ship and boat timbers, clapboards, barrels, casks, and hogsheads. New England also became one of the primary providers of fresh and salt provisions, rum, and livestock needed to see settlers through the winter.[79] The richness and variety of trade goods which moved through Newfoundland were made possible not only by geography,

[79] Lounsbury, 608-11, 613-14; Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 91-2; Hatfield, 42-3.

ocean currents, and wind currents, but also by the fishery which attracted so many merchants and "adventurers." Greater access to the fishery was facilitated by settlement in Newfoundland, which was both fairly achievable and beneficial to different social classes of people.

Settling in Newfoundland or engaging in the seasonal migratory fishery was an easily accessible goal for those of "middling" or more impressive means. Investment in the fishery or settling a plantation in Newfoundland required far less capital than in other colonies and promised a quicker, more reliable return on one's investment.[80] Many English families and merchant groups, primarily from West Country counties but also from major trading ports like Bristol and London, were involved in the Newfoundland trade across decades, whether they owned their own ships or not. In 1641, a ninety-ton ship could be hired for £25 and 8 shillings per month and both victualled and insured for a few hundred pounds more, the costs varying depending on the size of the crew. Victualling and insurance on larger ships and longer voyages, as well as paying the mariners'/fishermen's salaries, could get quite expensive but the profits from such ventures were usually much greater than the investment. Additionally, freight and insurance on a Newfoundland voyage tended to be more affordable in general because fishing ships invariably journeyed to the island without a cargo. In 1622, Richard Whitbourne estimated that a one-hundred-ton ship with a crew of forty men could be victualled for £420 which included mariners' food rations and equipment such as tools, fishing tackle, and salt. Such a voyage would take on a lading of fish at Newfoundland, journey to southern Europe, and realize a profit for trade goods during this leg of the

[80] Davies, 15-16.

voyage approaching £2,250. Traditionally, a voyage's investors received two-thirds of the profits and the remaining third went to pay the mariners. These arrangements favored funding by groups of investors which reduced the risk of enormous loss by a single backer who might recover nothing should the ship be lost in mid-voyage. Shared costs and fairly quick returns meant that men of relatively modest capital could easily invest annually in ventures of this type and realize respectable profit.[81]

Becoming a year-round resident of Newfoundland may have been costlier than maintaining a seasonal presence but if so, it probably did not exceed the expense of the migratory trade by very much. Resident fishermen also had to shelter, feed, and pay their servants but they almost certainly had far fewer than the number of the average migratory fishing crew. Moreover, resident fishing masters did not have to hire, insure, or victual ships annually. Prospective colonists might settle in Newfoundland as cost-effectively, if not more so, than elsewhere in the Atlantic New World.

Staking out and maintaining a plantation in Newfoundland required significantly less overhead and fewer resources than elsewhere in colonial North America. In virtually all Atlantic colonies, as well as in Canada, the acquisition of considerable acreage, far in excess of what an independent Newfoundland planter needed to get themselves started, was a fundamental requirement. In this respect, Newfoundland stands apart in that its primary economic industry was not an agricultural one. As a result, far less acreage was required for the Newfoundland plantation – enough to support a dwelling, a kitchen garden, and stages and flakes to process fish. As communities developed, production apparatus like stages and wharves could be shared and rented, decreasing the need for

[81] Cell, *English Enterprise in Newfoundland*, location 240-87, 415-433, 3106-3111.

excessive acreage even further. Depending on the size of the planter's fishing operation, they might also have had to build cabins and cookrooms for fishing servants. However, most planters with small to medium-sized operations tended to share their lodgings with their servants. Generally, only planters employing twenty or more servants built separate dwellings, and those that did were far more likely to rent such structures seasonally to migratory crews. Some wealthier planters possessed extensive pasture and hayfields for animal husbandry activities, but the seasonal demands of the fishery and the shortage of fodder during the winter as a result of Newfoundland's short growing season kept herds relatively small. Equipment, not land, was the more important investment since Newfoundland's main economic activities took place at sea.

With these considerations in mind, it is difficult to imagine a single Newfoundland plantation occupying much more than ten acres. Even the most successful, individually-owned, settled fishing operations likely occupied between one eighth and one half of this acreage – and a good thing too, for Newfoundland's coastline is limited. Sir George Calvert's Pool Plantation at Ferryland, for example, was only four acres. The most important equipment for planters and their fishermen included stages, flakes, boats, fishing tackle, salt, and other small tools for processing the fish. Depending on its size, an inshore fishing boat could cost up to £6. The wealthiest planters could employ as many as thirty boats in their fishing operations, but the majority of planters on the English Shore during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries owned only one or two. Richard Whitbourne reported that salt sold for as little as twenty shillings per ton in the 1620s. Small tools and enough fishing tackle for the season could likely be had for

even less.[82] In all, with hard work and minimal investment in comparison with what it would take to establish an agricultural plantation of ten or more acres in the continental colonies or the Caribbean, one could establish oneself as a small planter in Newfoundland with under £20 of initial investment.

This modest figure stands in sharp contrast to the cost of establishing a plantation in the Caribbean, particularly by the mid-to-late seventeenth century. Earlier seventeenth-century settlers in Barbados confronted land prices around ten shillings per acre or less but during the 1640s, prices rose nearly tenfold. An acre of land valued at ten shillings in 1640 was worth £2 or more in 1643 and £5 by 1646. A substantial sugar plantation required around fifty acres to generate the kinds of profits needed to make the expense of sugar production worth the investment. Producing sugar required building and maintaining a sugar works and, due to the harsh and grueling nature of the labor involved, also required the proprietor to continually purchase indentures or slaves – at least one for every two acres a planter owned. If one's plantation were located in the mountainous region in the northern part of the island, they would require even more labor to produce a sugar crop comparable to those with superior land and fewer laborers. One sugar planter claimed in 1689 that if a planter owned one hundred slaves, they would need to continually purchase six per year just to keep up consistent production levels. Once the industry was well established in Barbados, it became the convention to sell or purchase plantations already equipped with both manufacturing equipment and labor. Historian Richard Dunn reported that five plantations sold between 1646 and 1648

[82] Richard Whitbourne, "A Discourse and Discovery of New-Found-Land," printed in London by Felix Kingston, 1622 (version B), reprinted in Gillian T. Cell, ed., *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630*, 101-95 (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982), 142; Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 26-27, 332*n*; Miller, "Avalon and Maryland," 252.

ranged in price from £1,800 to £4,500 per hundred acres. Even when the opening of Jamaica to sugar production temporarily brought down Barbadian land prices, one hundred acres could still not be had for much less than £1000.[83]

The Caribbean sugar planters arguably commanded the most impressive wealth in the Atlantic basin but unless one arrived early in the seventeenth century or exceptionally well capitalized, economic success or status mobility was considerably more difficult to achieve, especially in Barbados. The earliest small planters and farmers in Jamaica fared decently well but still could not afford to become sugar planters. These small producers tended to farm their own land-grants themselves, growing food crops and managing livestock for personal consumption, cultivating small amounts of cotton, cacao, and indigo for small trade, and expanding their operations slowly. By the early eighteenth century, Jamaican sugar planters commanded the most impressive wealth in the Atlantic basin and establishing oneself as an independent planter on the island became nearly impossible for everyone except the very rich.[84]

Establishing a plantation in New England or the Chesapeake required significantly more acreage than a Newfoundland plantation as well, although 'first-comers' to a settlement or servants who completed indentures might receive a land-grant of between ten and fifty acres rather than be required to purchase land outright – a prospect often decidedly out of a working-class person's reach. The agricultural and husbandry activities of a moderately successful New England farm required one hundred to two hundred acres which many New England families did manage to acquire by the end of the seventeenth century. Even in the Chesapeake where the soil tended to be more

[83] Dunn, 66.
[84] Ibid., 91; Taylor, 217-18, 220.

fertile, ten acres was likely the bare minimum acreage required for remotely profitable tobacco production in the early seventeenth-century before tobacco prices began to fall. Small tobacco plantations established in early seventeenth-century Barbados ranged roughly from ten to thirty acres and found themselves unable to stay afloat as tobacco prices plunged. Neither were they large enough to support sugar production when the boom began.[85]

Not only was extensive land acquisition nearly essential for economic success in other colonies, but obtaining access to lands was less complicated in Newfoundland than elsewhere in the colonial world. Most of the earliest permanent European settlers on the island resided within chartered colonies governed by a company or lord proprietor, such as Cupids, Ferryland, and Bristol's Hope. In these communities, settlers were brought to the colonies at the proprietor's expense and all worked for the common benefit of a single plantation. When such companies or proprietors decided, fairly early in the seventeenth century, that settled Newfoundland colonies could not produce the kind of profit they sought, their investors abandoned them. In some cases, some settlers departed these colonies as well but, in all cases, there were settlers who remained. By the mid-seventeenth century, it was clear that a "vernacular" pattern of both settlement and development of the fishery was well underway. In the absence of lords proprietor or company support, remaining settlers and others who came from the West Country and Ireland to join them developed "fishing rooms" for themselves in and around the old colonies. The lack of formal infrastructure makes the observer question how such development was possible or sustainable, but the pre-existing mechanisms of the fishery

[85] Dunn, 53, 67; Taylor, 170-72.

provided ongoing and regular contact with English migratory fishermen, sack ships, and merchants by which settlers maintained trade links, communication, and lifelines to the outside world. This is especially true of three regions: the southern Avalon Peninsula, the St. John's area, and Conception Bay.[86]

By the Restoration, resident fishermen were well and comfortably established all along the English Shore, many of them independent of anything approaching a proprietor or governor. By this time, Newfoundland's greatest planters were managing local operations comparable in size to West Country merchants who organized large, annual, triangular, migratory voyages.[87] In the virtual absence of formal land-grant systems, which were common in the rest of the colonial world, some observers have insisted that Newfoundland settlers were essentially squatters. Nonetheless, as rudimentary systems of English oversight, law, and governance continued to develop into the late seventeenth century and early eighteenth century, the land claims of most planters tended to be recognized by British authorities based upon the legal custom of "use." Those who could provide evidence of continuous occupation and "use" of their fishing rooms and lands over several years tended to be granted rights of possession to those lands in perpetuity, although freehold title would not be available to Newfoundlanders until the nineteenth century.[88]

It is worth noting that the legal principle of "use" was widespread across the British world, and was regularly employed to justify the "rights" of English immigrants

[86] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 53-55, 143, 233, 318; Stock, "Letter to Propaganda Fide," retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/simon-stock-letter-1631.php.

[87] Pope, "Modernization on Hold," 250.

[88] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 43-4; English, 6.

to particular lands. In the continental colonies, where English settlements bumped up against the traditional lands of Native Americans, the English used the principle to support their rights to occupation over those of the groups they were displacing. Because many indigenous peoples did not "use" land in exactly the same ways as the English, that is, by enclosing, clearing, planting, or otherwise "improving" it, the English regularly refused to recognize native ownership of particular lands. This explains why the Plymouth settlers laid claim to certain lands but not those on which the Wampanoag had already planted corn.[89] In Virginia, however, some settlers saw no impediment to the annexation of cultivated maize fields from their indigenous neighbors, especially as their own settled population expanded. Even though the Powhatans of Virginia actually did "use" land in much the same ways as Europeans, English settlers refused to acknowledge it. John Smith described the thirty-odd villages and numerous cultivated maize fields of the Powhatans as an "overgrown" and "plain wilderness."[90]

Elsewhere in the colonial world, barriers to land acquisition could be more significant than in Newfoundland, and in large part because one usually had to be both an early settler of the region in question and/or in the good grace and favor of the colonial official or corporate town body overseeing land distribution. In both Virginia and Maryland, early settlers favored by their proprietor or governor received the choicest lands, giving the early tobacco planters a solid foundation upon which to build while the price of tobacco remained high. Settlers of working-class or "middling" status arriving in the Chesapeake after 1640 found that most of the best parcels of land were already

[89] William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), 54-57.

[90] Davies, 149; Taylor, 129.

granted. Smaller, less fecund plantations then struggled to succeed with a crop the value of which was in its bulk and the price of which continued to fall. Virginians and Marylanders whose property could not support sufficiently good-quality tobacco production diversified economically, much in the same vein as New Englanders, with food crops, animal husbandry, and timber products.

Far more than in the Chesapeake, obtaining a land-grant seems to have been much easier in New England, where the town council ruled. However, potential settlers did face problems, similar to their Chesapeake counterparts, obtaining parcels of decent agricultural quality unless they were among the first, and therefore usually the most influential, settlers of a New England town. Latecomers might be left with rockier soil or might be located too far from the center of town to access important local infrastructure. They might therefore be left with no alternative but to either work harder or move out of the area. This was a key reason for the significant expansion of New England during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. New England towns were established around what the region's leading settlers considered fundamental institutions, the most important of which was the church. Town meeting halls and schools were also important institutions in many towns. When a town began to sprawl too much or become too populated, those unable to prosper or who faced barriers to town infrastructure might move on to a less populated town or attempt to secure a charter to found a new one. Moreover, due to the fairly limited size of most colonial New England towns whose conventional social organization around town government, church, and school was not conducive to large populations or sprawling geography, there were many young people in New England unable to establish farms of their own locally due to the land shortage that

inevitably confronted towns in the region. As such, the sons of New England farmers tended to marry later than their European and colonial counterparts since so many had to wait for their inheritances, which they preferred to do rather than start again with no capital somewhere else. Moreover, most families needed their sons' labor on their farms since New England farming families rarely kept more than one servant. Throughout the colonial period, New England farms in well-established, well-situated towns like Salem, Massachusetts got smaller, being increasingly subdivided among heirs across generations.[91]

While most planters in Newfoundland made respectable or simply decent incomes comparable to the "middling" sort in the continental colonies, a small handful of them made extraordinary incomes which, as Peter Pope put it, "raised the eyebrows" of European visitors. Father Jean Baudoin, who visited the settlements of Conception Bay during the 1670s, was impressed with the wealth of the residents noting that some families in the neighborhood could boast a net worth of one hundred thousand livres, the value of which exceeds a quarter of a million dollars today.[92] Richard Bushman observed that what he referred to as the "refinement" of America began around 1690, when pursuit of the material and social trappings of aristocracy began to "trickle down" to other social classes. Up until this point, most European dwellings in North America were modest, with few structures approaching anything which might be called a "mansion" or "manor." The stone "mansion house" financed by and built for George Calvert at Ferryland in the 1620s was probably the first such European structure built on the continent and likely the

[91] Taylor, 170; Davies, 69; Paul A. Boyer and Stephen Nissenbaum, *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), 94.

[92] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 316, 422.

grandest until the following century.[93] Archaeological excavations of this mansion house, later occupied for several decades by the Kirke family, uncovered remnants of fine jewelry and accessories, glassware, and exquisitely crafted and monogrammed Portuguese faience plates. These ceramic vessels are a particularly significant archaeological find because of how rare such artifacts are in the context of seventeenth-century North America. Portugal was an important trading partner for colonial Newfoundland and Portuguese ceramics have been found at several seventeenth-century sites along the English Shore but the "SK" vessels, believed to have been made for Sara Kirke, widow of Sir David Kirke, are particularly fine. They were likely made as a tributary gift for Lady Kirke in recognition of her value as a trading partner with merchants in Portugal. Examination of the vessels shows that they were decorative display pieces, not functional tableware, and the varying locations of different fragments suggests they were passed down as heirlooms to the Kirke children living nearby.

The fine architecture, objects and luxury goods recovered from the Ferryland sites testify to the strong and lucrative trade relationships the wealthiest Newfoundland planters were able to maintain throughout the Atlantic basin and the level of gentility which could be cultivated by them as early as the 1630s and 1640s.[94] Of course, no more

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[93] Richard L. Bushman, *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities* (New York: Vintage Books, 1992), xi-xiii; James Lyttleton, "The Manor Houses of the 1st Lord Baltimore in an English Atlantic World," *Post-Medieval Archaeology* 51, no. 1 (June 2017): 55.

[94] Colony of Avalon, "Miscellaneous Artifacts from Ferryland Archaeological Site, NL," page 3: "Ornate Knife Hilt" (Fld-479), retrieved 20 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/miscellaneous-artifacts-page-three.php; Colony of Avalon, "Miscellaneous Artifacts from Ferryland Archaeological Site, NL," page 4: "Terra Sigillata Vessels" (Fld-372), (Fld-380), (Fld-388), (Fld-401); "Glass buttons" (Fld-199); "Gilt glass beads (Fld-192), retrieved 20 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/miscellaneous-artifacts-page-four.php; Colony of Avalon, "Miscellaneous Artifacts from Ferryland Archaeological Site, NL," page 5: "Wineglass foot" (Fld-409); "Wineglass stem" (Fld-414); "Gold finger ring"; "Gold finger ring with cross-hatched decoration," retrieved 20 August, 2021.

than four or five families on the entire English Shore of Newfoundland could boast the size of the fishing operations or the wealth of the Kirkes but unlike other colonial regions further south, it was much easier for a working-class European to pursue economic advancement in Newfoundland by means of the same low establishment and operating costs of which their wealthier settler counterparts took advantage.

Thanks to the relatively low cost of establishing oneself as a planter, the pre-existing infrastructure of the "sack" trade, and the competitive wages fishing servants received compared to their European and colonial counterparts around the Atlantic, upward economic or status mobility was arguably as easily accessible in Newfoundland as anywhere else in the Atlantic world and in some comparative contexts, more so. In Newfoundland, a working-class person might manage to save enough in a few seasons fishing at Newfoundland to become a small-scale 'planter' or 'by-boat-keeper' (independent migratory fisherman) himself. Depending on the worker's skill and position in the hierarchy of fishing labor, a fishing servant might make between £10 and £30 for signing on to two summers and a winter (roughly sixteen to eighteen months) at Newfoundland.[95] A person who could manage to purchase just one boat and source sufficient timber to erect a wooden stage for processing the cod could employ three or

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https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/miscellaneous-artifacts-page-five.php; Colony of Avalon, "Miscellaneous Artifacts from Ferryland Archaeological Site, NL," page 6: "Sugar tongs"; "Gold-plated brass spur"; "Silver thimble"; "Gold-plated cufflinks," retrieved 20 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/miscellaneous-artifacts-page-six.php; Colony of Avalon, "Miscellaneous Artifacts from Ferryland Archaeological Site, NL," page 7: "Gold seals," retrieved 20 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/miscellaneous-artifacts-page-seven.php; Sweeny, 296; Barry C. Gaulton and Tânia Manuel Casimiro, "Custom-Made Ceramics, Trans-Atlantic Business Partnerships and Entrepreneurial Spirit in Early Modern Newfoundland: An Examination of the SK Vessels from Ferryland," *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 19, no. 1 (March 2015): 15-18.

[95] Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 10.

four others, catching and curing about twenty-thousand fish per season and producing around ten tons of salt cod. With ten tons, or two hundred quintals, at the healthy price of ten shillings per quintal, a fisherman with one boat and three or four servants could gross £100 in a season. This level of revenue might be expected during a "good" or "average" year. However, production capability did not matter during years with poorer catch rates. The best catch rates during the final years of the seventeenth century, sometimes exceeding four hundred quintals caught per boat, might secure the planter gross revenues exceeding £200 for every boat they owned. In "poor" or "bad" years, they might gross as little as £60-£70 per boat they owned. By 1660, resident planters were producing a third of all the Newfoundland fish exported by the British. By the late 1670s, the island's resident fishery alone – excluding the migratory industry – had nearly eclipsed all of New England's inshore fishery.[96] By no means did the majority of fishing servants become planters, but the majority of Newfoundland planters had once been servants.[97] Once they had achieved such status mobility, finding buyers for one's catch was made easier by the growth of the sack trade whose ships differed from the migratory fishing industry in that they came to the island not to catch fish, but simply to buy it before voyaging to markets.

As the seventeenth century progressed and the sack trade matured, fishermen with smaller operations found it continually easier to find buyers for their fish without needing to compete with far wealthier local fishermen with much larger operations. Typically, fishermen pre-arranged the sale of their catch at the beginning of the fishing season and larger, more well-connected planters would likely already know who would arrive to buy their fish and when. Smaller, less well-capitalized operations might arrange with local

[96] Pope, "Modernization on Hold," 250.
[97] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 173.

merchants, through a credit/truck system, to receive their season's provisions and supplies on credit with the promise to sell their entire catch to the merchant. The sack trade, however, ensured that most of the island's producers, no matter their size or merchant relationships, might find buyers for their fish.

Prior to the 1630s, the vast majority of sack ships were Dutch who dominated the Atlantic carrying trade. In the ensuing decades, English competition for Dutch sacks began to emerge, chiefly in a vernacular fashion akin to the development of both the settled and migratory fisheries at Newfoundland. Within a few decades, the English had effectively ousted the Dutch from the Newfoundland carrying trade. Surprisingly, most of the English sack fleet were small craft, most often less than one hundred tons, operated by investors of modest capital – yet another example of opportunity for economic or status mobility by connection with colonial Newfoundland. The development of the English sack trade further facilitated the close interdependence and mutual benefit of the settled and migratory industries in important ways. The 1634 voyage of the 240-ton *Faith* of London is partly instructive in this respect.

Shipmaster Thomas Bredcake was instructed by the freighter, John Delabarre, to voyage to Newfoundland. For bills of exchange on Delabarre himself, Bredcake was to purchase four thousand quintals of dried cod from the fishing ships, *Eagle*, *Ollive*, and *Desire*, all of Dartmouth. Shipping records indicate that one of the three ships' masters "fayled in his number of fish," meaning that Bredcake was only able to collect 3,784 quintals. However, he was easily able to purchase an additional one thousand quintals from another migratory fishing master or planter in order to satisfy the investors' requirements. In some cases, sacks or shorter-term fishing ships might arrange to buy a

planter's catch but were prevented by weather or other calamities from sailing at the appointed time. Believing that their buyers were not going to arrive, the planter would likely be able to sell to another sack or fishing ship, many of whom visited multiple Newfoundland ports in order to collect a full cargo before the voyage to market. The sack trade provided improved access to markets for resident producers but also benefitted the migratory industry.

Like resident planters, migratory fishing ships might sell their catch to the increasing numbers of sacks as well, dramatically reducing their freight and insurance costs. Not only would these fishing ships be able to sail to Newfoundland in ballast but could sail home, or to market, with only small cargoes of "train" oil. This left ample room for paying passengers such as by-boat-keepers and their servants who might make the crossing for between thirty shillings and £2, one way. It also left more room for individual fishermen/mariners to exercise their right of "portage," that is, to take on their own cargoes for personal venture on the next leg of the voyage. In this fashion, the various branches of the Newfoundland industry, while technically in competition with one another, found greater success and mutual benefit through cooperation. The *Faith* itself was a London ship with London investors using the expertise of captains and fishing crews from the West Country, their traditional rivals in the Newfoundland trade.[98]

Fishing servants at Newfoundland could boast some of the best wages for working-class people in the Atlantic basin. The labor differentiation involved in fish production, the hierarchies of salary, and the high demand for skilled labor all worked in the favor of fishing servants. Production units consisted of at least five people, some of

[98] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 98, 110-113; Davies, 160-61; Pope, "Modernization on Hold," 243, 250-52, 264.

whom might perform dual roles by both fishing and working on the production lines. Crews of at least three per boat rowed out to fish from dawn until late afternoon. When the boat crews returned with the day's catch, the shore crew went to work "making" fish. The catch made its way through a processing line, the first step of which was carried out by the "header" who removed the fish heads and guts quickly and cleanly, setting aside the livers in a vat to render to "train" oil in the sun. The header then passed the fish across the table to the "splitter" who deftly removed the spine before passing the flayed fish on to the "salter." Headers and splitters were renowned and well-paid for their swiftness and dexterity. Contemporaries reported that the best of these skilled workers might process one fish every four seconds. The salter required skill as well and an instinct for the job, estimating exactly the appropriate amount of salt with which to coat each piece before it was carted away to be spread on "flakes"[99] or rocky places onshore where it would be wind-dried and tended daily. Too little salt would produce veiny-looking "redshanks" fish and too much would "burn" the fish, causing it to break. Such "unmerchantable" fish commanded a much lower price and was usually sold to feed enslaved laborers in the southern and Caribbean colonies. Boys and "green men," or unskilled workers new to the fishery, might serve on boat crews fishing, hauling the catch to the stages to be processed, hauling processed fish away to be dried, and tending to the dry cure daily.

It is difficult to say why an apparently capitalist, mass-production-style enterprise like the Newfoundland fishery did not generally seek the free labor of enslaved workers as other major Atlantic industries did during the colonial period. Perhaps the

[99] Raised platforms made of pine boughs.

"vernacular" and generally non-directed pattern of Newfoundland development did not allow for a proliferation of the kinds of well-capitalized plantations which could afford to purchase slaves. Perhaps the fishing masters and their investors did not view long-term indentured servants or slaves as ideal for the kind of time-sensitive fishing and exacting processing work demanded in the inshore fishery. Fishing servants had to be motivated to work the required fourteen to twenty hours per day, six days per week during the fishing season, and remain personally invested in ensuring the best-quality dry cure possible to produce "merchantable" fish. The responses to arduous living and working conditions, such as resistance and desertion, common to indentured and more particularly, enslaved workers, might have very quickly disrupted the exceptionally delicate rhythm of the fishing season, endangering the profits of the entire venture. Additionally, the quality of both the catch and cure had to be excellent to keep up the price of cod. Perhaps the planters believed that the best way to motivate such a workforce to achieve such goals was by offering competitive wages.

Indeed, Newfoundland fishing servants in general made more than their working-class counterparts elsewhere in the Atlantic including regular seamen, agricultural and animal husbandsmen, builders' laborers, and even the servants in the New England fishery. Newfoundland fishing servants made up to 152% of regular mariners' wages and up to 228% of what builders' laborers made during the second half of the seventeenth century.[100] The significant rises in remuneration for mariners and fishermen during the

[100] James Yonge, Extract from "A Journal of All the Memorable Occurrances [sic] of my Life," in F.N.L. Poynter, ed., *The Journal of James Yonge (1647-1721): Plymouth Surgeon* (London: Longman, Green & Co. Ltd., 1963), 23-60, revised by P.E. Pope, retrieved 24 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/james-yonge-journal-extract-1663.php; Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 26-27, 169-186; Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 10.

seventeenth century were a response to geopolitical and labor market factors which hint at a nascent capitalism, but the structure of their wages retained its customary medieval and early modern character.

In some twentieth-century studies, early modern mariners have been described as some of the earliest examples of a "wage-earning proletariat," a term which can be misleading since, to modern sensibilities, it suggests dependence, a lack of agency, and perhaps privation. The improvements to remuneration and the increasing bargaining power of seventeenth-century mariners flies in the face of this notion however. Early modern mariners and fishermen did not work for "set wages" in the same sense that nineteenth-century industrial laborers did but were paid through a combination of wages, shares, and "perquisites" according to centuries-old customary practices. Seafaring was exceptionally taxing, difficult, and dangerous work and those who signed on to a crew expected certain standards to be met. Proper victualling was usually a sticking point and bad food on any voyage would make it exceedingly difficult for investors and masters to recruit crewmembers a second time who felt themselves ill-used the first time. A decent monthly wage and a share in the voyage's profits were equally important.

Average monthly wages for non-specialist European mariners and fishermen rose from seventeen shillings in the early seventeenth century to twenty-five shillings by the early eighteenth and could fluctuate to even higher levels during wartime. Northern European seafaring economies like England paid their mariners and fishermen even better, an average of twenty-five to forty shillings (£2) per month, primarily thanks to the bargaining power workers gained from the labor shortage in the north Atlantic. Crew members might receive between a fifth and third-share in the profits of a voyage with

more senior, experienced, or skilled mariners receiving a larger proportion of the crew's share. Finally, many mariners were granted rights of "portage," or free cargo space for venture goods which the worker might sell for his own profit during a particular leg of the voyage. A sailor on a Newfoundland fishing voyage might receive cargo space for roughly six quintals of fish, valued at around £3, which he might trade for other goods, for hard currency, or for letters of exchange upon arrival at market. It was apparently quite common for both a specialist or non-specialist mariner's right of portage to add as much or more to his total remuneration than his shares or monthly wages.

An instructive example is the mariner Michael Johnson who set sail on an eight-month voyage in April 1642 in the *Fame* of London. His exact wages are unknown, as is the amount of the crew's share, and the percentage he received. What is known is that Johnson brought with him between £5 and £6 for the purposes of purchasing and trading venture goods on his own account. Depending on his position and salary, this personal investment might well have been worth between three and six months' wages, not including the crew's share. He had use of a cabin onboard the *Fame* which might suggest that he occupied a higher position in the seafaring employment hierarchy. By renting out his cabin to passengers and by purchasing and trading goods during each stop on the voyage, Johnson was able to turn his £5 or £6 into roughly £50 – not including his shares or wages. Seventeenth-century seafaring could apparently be much more lucrative than historians have previously supposed, particularly in the north Atlantic. These industry conventions greatly benefitted fishing servants in Newfoundland because they forced planters, by-boat-keepers, and migratory fishing masters to offer wages competitive with those of regular mariners who were able to benefit from more sources of remuneration.

Sir John Berry reported during the 1670s that seasonal agricultural laborers or migratory husbandsmen from the West Country, who might make £3 per season in either occupation in England, might make £20 for a season fishing at Newfoundland. Depending on their skills and experience, such a salary was indeed possible.[101] The demand for labor not only stimulated higher wages but gave mariners and fishing servants impressive collective bargaining power.

David Featherstone noted that the mariner's power during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries lay not only in the north Atlantic labor shortage but also in the mariner's mobility. The threat of strikes and desertion was powerful enough to force better terms of remuneration in cases where the voyage was time-sensitive, as it was in the Newfoundland fishery. This was true in other industries as well. All business in the port of London ground to a halt when sailors went on strike in May of 1768, causing officials of the Hudson's Bay Company to write anxiously to their investors to urge them to meet the sailors' demands. Trading relationships with First Nations fur traders could be weakened if they had to wait too long for the voyagers to arrive with the European goods they desired. Accordingly, the Hudson's Bay Company's investors and ship's master agreed to pay the mariners' demanded wage of forty shillings per month.[102] In addition to superior wages and bargaining power, the way labor was structured in the fishery benefitted workers as well.

[101] Richard J. Blakemore, "Pieces of Eight, Pieces of Eight: Seamen's Earnings and the Venture Economy of Early Modern Seafaring," *Economic History Review* 70, no. 4 (2017): 1153-4, 1155, 1164-6, 1168-9; Pope, "Modernization on Hold," 257, 261; Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 169.

[102] David Featherstone, "Atlantic Networks, Antagonisms and the Formation of Subaltern Political Identities," *Social & Cultural Geography* 6, no. 3 (June 2005): 392-3, 396.

The least skilled fishermen who acquired an apprenticeship were best placed to climb the hierarchy and make more money in less time, but few formal apprenticeships were undertaken in the Newfoundland fishery. Nonetheless, the organization of the industry functioned quite organically to continuously produce more skilled fishermen over time. The Privy Council in England required that approximately one fifth of all migratory fishermen be "new" or "green" men, usually boys. Their purpose was to encourage ongoing mariner training to keep the navy strong and supplied with fresh recruits but the rule made it necessary and natural for more experienced fishermen to move up the ladder regarding jobs and remuneration as more novices annually joined the fishery. "Green" men might only make between £1 and £3 per season in "wages," in addition to their share of the catch and any "perquisites," but they would have the opportunity to observe and learn additional skills. The most skilled processors, such as the "headers," "splitters," and "salters," could make between £6 and £10 per season in wages alone and as much profit in a single season from all sources of remuneration as an indentured servant over several years of service in the continental colonies. The most experienced and knowledgeable fishermen, or those who rose to become shipmasters or boatmasters, might make between £20 and £40 per season. Such access to economic and status mobility seems to have been less available in other colonies and their industries.[103]

In contrast, an unpropertied worker wishing to make their own way in the Caribbean, the Chesapeake, or New England would likely have had to sell themselves into indentured servitude for between three and seven years before being paid. Even then, assuming one survived one's indenture, one could not be certain of amassing

[103] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 30, 173, 177, 180, 186.

enough capital either to acquire land or provide the means to work it until a profit was made. Significant numbers of "freemen" were apt to hit opportunity ceilings quickly and find themselves forced to sell any newly acquired lands, awarded to them upon completion of their indentures, to wealthier men. In Maryland for example, less than a fifth of indentured servants entering the colony during the 1670s both proved their right to and claimed the fifty acres promised to them at the beginning of their indentures. And out of those 1,249 claimants, only 241 settled on their land grants. The rest sold their lands as soon as they received title to them.

Freedom dues for a servant in the Caribbean, where the majority of European immigrants landed during the early colonial period, declined throughout the seventeenth century. Until the 1630s, between five and ten acres of land were given to Barbadians who completed indentures, as well as payment in goods such as clothing, tools, and a pre-determined amount of sugar or tobacco. Once the sugar boom began, land shortages quickly axed the land benefit for indentures. By mid-century, freedom dues for Caribbean indentures, roughly £10, were commonly paid in kind, usually clothing and about four hundred pounds of sugar, a product whose value continued to decline. By the mid-to-late seventeenth century, these dues might not have even paid for an Atlantic return voyage or for passage elsewhere. Some indentures may have had no choice but to become permanent wage laborers, or worse, sell themselves back into servitude to avoid starvation.[104] Additionally, small planters who had established themselves early in the seventeenth century were increasingly forced into selling their small plots to larger planters by the third quarter of the century. This mainly emerged from the wealthiest

[104] Davies, 101-102; Dunn, 72; Taylor, 207-208.

planters' desire to dismantle the island's militia in which many small-scale planters served in order to supplement their incomes, but which wealthier planters felt interfered with sugar production.[105]

Among the continental colonies, New France and New England offered comparatively accessible upward mobility to working-class Europeans by the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Quebec and Montreal were uniquely situated geographically to take advantage of the richest resources in the fur trade. Men who became *voyageurs*, or middle-men between First Nations hunters and European traders, made four times the wages of agricultural laborers and six times the wages of female domestic servants. The land distribution practices of the seigneurial system in the region and the diversification of New France's economy led to a marked socioeconomic differentiation among the peasantry which could never have been achieved in the French Caribbean sugar colonies. Many settler families of New France became prosperous enough to establish themselves and their children independently on their own lands, whether through concession, purchase, or inheritance.[106]

Servants in New England served varying terms for varying benefits and some upward mobility was possible there also. For seven years of service, William Snow of Plymouth received twelve bushels of "Indian grain," one calf, eight bushels of "Indian corn," one young sow pig, and two suits of clothes. It is difficult to quantify the exact value of these goods but they do seemingly constitute a fairly solid nest egg for an aspiring independent farmer and homesteader of the seventeenth century. Just one bushel of grain might produce several dozen pounds of flour, enough to bake a small family's

[105] Dunn, 339.
[106] Sweeny, 290-91.

bread for a year, to say nothing of the value of the livestock and corn Snow also received at the end of his indenture. Edward Doty came to Plymouth as a servant in 1620 and evidently prospered as a freeman, receiving his land-grant as a *Mayflower* passenger, taking on an apprentice, and employing at least two servants. His estate at his death in 1655 was valued at a little less than £138, including £60 in real estate. This level of net worth for a person who began their life as a servant was quite respectable for the region and many colonial New Englanders ended their lives with similarly modest affluence.[107] In a region with little disparity in terms of wealth and income and with the supports of the local community and its infrastructure which was particularly well-developed, servants could do as well or better in New England as elsewhere in the Atlantic world. It is worth noting however, that the average "middling" New Englander's estate at the end of life was roughly equal to the gross revenues of a single fishing season for a Newfoundland planter who owned just one or two boats.

Despite the profitability of Newfoundland's fishery, it only benefitted the island's people for roughly five months of the year. During the off-season, resident fishermen might augment their incomes in several ways. They might serve as caretakers for migratory fishing masters and by-boat-keepers. One migratory producer reported paying forty shillings (£2 – equal to a month's pay at sea) to a small planter to care for and perhaps also make small repairs to his equipment during the winter. Planters and resident servants might also spend the winter hunting, trapping for furs, building boats, or producing lumber products like firewood and clapboards. Both the settled and migratory industries needed firewood and required that shelters, cookrooms, and stages be

[107] Deetz and Deetz, 111-12, 194, 202, 209.

maintained annually. Residents could receive remuneration for carrying out these duties on behalf of planters, by-boat-keepers, and migratory fishing masters. Most residents kept livestock for personal consumption but those who kept large herds often sold meat or dairy products locally. Many residents ran taverns, whether licensed or unlicensed, to supplement their incomes. Still others maintained year-round local trade in provisions and luxury goods. Even if one owned no more than a dwelling-house, one could take in boarders.

Most of these activities constituted a subsistence and sufficiency but had significantly less commercial value combined compared to the fishery. The fur trade and timber industry strike the observer as the most obvious and promising means for economic diversification and expansion. However, the most valuable and abundant fur-bearing animals were principally concentrated on the mainland, as were much richer timber resources than Newfoundland could boast. Winters on the island saw the development of a culture of pilfering among permanent residents. Sixteenth and early seventeenth-century Beothuks salvaged iron from migratory fishing camps, abandoned for the winter, by disassembling structures for the nails that held them together. When the English and French settled more permanently on the island, both European groups sometimes engaged in similar activities during the winter, raiding one another's migratory fishing rooms for equipment and supplies. Winters in Newfoundland could be long, difficult, and harsh. Climate and weather-induced isolation, privation, even starvation was sometimes reported in the outports. The lucrative summer fishery was the engine that drove all prosperity on the island and was largely enough to help see most residents through the winter. However, several consecutive years of poor catch rates or

wet summers which prevented proper prosecution of the dry cure could be disastrous for all who made a living in Newfoundland.[108]

Clearly, the major economic drawback for colonial Newfoundlanders was that besides some of the world's richest cod stocks, there was little else in the way of natural resources or commodities during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which approached the bounty of the fishery, or which might significantly augment or help diversify the island's economy. The mining, forestry, and energy sectors were still to come in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The fishery was indeed profitable during the earlier colonial period, one of the most important economic concerns in the Atlantic. Yet, when the fishery experienced lean times, wealthy planters became poorer, small planters slid into debt, and employers sometimes tried to find ways to avoid paying servants their wages.

Falling fish prices during the third quarter of the seventeenth century stressed both the settled and migratory industries. The French invasions of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries temporarily depopulated whole settlements along the English Shore and the inshore fishery ground to a halt. These events reduced the wealth of great planters and forced many employers to contemplate ways to cut costs. At such times, the assistance of merchants was vital to keeping settlements on the English Shore supplied and provisioned but over a run of several poor years in the fishery, assistance could turn into dependence. This was especially true for smaller planters who found it easier than their wealthier counterparts to fall into a seemingly never-ending cycle of debt. Employers unable to pay wages might claim that their servants did not adequately

[108] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 22, 68-9, 306-310, 337-42, 344-47; Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 9, 11-12.

perform or complete the duties stipulated in their shipping papers. They might attempt to change contracts at the end of the season, selling all of the catch to a merchant unaffiliated with his crew, to avoid paying them their shares. Many employers offered luxury goods like alcohol and tobacco on credit to workers, deducting the cost from their final wages. More than one employer might claim at the end of the season that workers had drunk and smoked all of their wages.

The prevalence of the credit/truck system in Newfoundland, especially by the eighteenth century, has been bemoaned by many nationalist Newfoundlanders who have traditionally viewed it as yet another manifestation of attempts to "retard" the island's development and keep the inhabitants poor. Historian Sean Cadigan takes a different view, arguing that the credit/truck system served as a mutually vital economic lifeline for both merchants and residents, all of whom relied on a generally undiversified monostaple economy. If residents could not afford to purchase provisions and supplies for the fishing season, then the merchants who depended on the producers' activities could not do business either. Neither commercial nor imperial interests sought to prevent the improvement of Newfoundland's economy. The supposedly "venal" merchants did not seek to prevent diversification, such as agricultural ventures, in order to keep people imprisoned in debt. In fact, such activity was roundly encouraged by all who had a stake in Newfoundland's success. The reality is that Newfoundland's geography and climate are partly responsible for the region's comparatively limited agricultural productivity and perhaps more importantly, the seasonal demands of the fishery always took precedence over agricultural or husbandry pursuits. Besides, it is unlikely that any amount of work on the part of settlers could have made Newfoundland agriculture as lucrative or as

successful as the fishery. As for the supposed ruthlessness of the merchants to whom many fishermen became indebted during hard times, Cadigan offers the conflict thesis a significant challenge by inquiring whether merchants can legitimately be historically vilified for not having as their first concern either the personal troubles of their debtors, or the development of Newfoundland's economy. This latter concern was almost certainly not foremost for merchants in any other colony whether or not they proved to have been instrumental in the colony's economic success, as was the case in New England.[109]

Despite periodically lean times, seventeenth and eighteenth-century Newfoundland saw impressive growth in both settlement and the fishery. The vernacular character of both developments provided economic and status mobility for English, French, and Irish settlers, migrants, and investors of modest capital. Newfoundland's dependence on the success of the fishery could be problematic but the stability of cod as a commodity facilitated fairly quick economic recovery during difficult periods. Working-class fishing servants in Newfoundland depended on their employers for shelter and sustenance just as they did in the rest of the Atlantic and colonial world but their shorter terms of service and superior wages promised greater upward mobility than other colonies could boast. In general, access to opportunity and economic independence were as easily achievable, if not more so, in Newfoundland as elsewhere in the colonial world.

[109] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 422-26; Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 9; Cadigan, vii-xi, 15, 165, 169.

CHAPTER IV

PHYSICAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

The most aggressive conditions faced by settlers in the New World included exposure, lack of clean drinking water, climate-related diseases, malnutrition, and physical danger from conflict with both rival European settler groups and with indigenous North Americans, whose traditional lands Europeans were now occupying. Newfoundlanders, both European and First Nations, experienced many challenges and successes comparable to their colonial and indigenous counterparts elsewhere in the North American Atlantic regarding such issues of overall physical health and safety and in some cases, fared better than those in other colonies mainly through accidents of geography, climate, and circumstance.

Newfoundland shares many of the same climactic vagaries characteristic of most of northeastern North America including long bitterly cold winters and temperate summers. Newfoundland's climate can be particularly challenging with sea ice sometimes blocking harbors for months in winter. The island also tends to experience milder, foggier, sometimes rainier summers and a notably later spring than one experiences on the mainland or further south.[110] Without sturdy habitation, European colonists in northeastern North America would have quickly succumbed to the elements.

[110] Crompton, 54-5; Miller, "Avalon and Maryland," 9.

The survivors of Sir William Vaughn's colony at Aquaforte, established just south of Ferryland in 1617, were lucky to have survived their first winter. It is unclear just how many settlers Vaughn initially sent to Aquaforte but by the time their new governor Richard Whitbourne arrived the following year, he found only six colonists huddled and freezing in the summer shacks left behind by migratory fishermen. For some unknown reason, whether because of lack of ability, knowledge, or wherewithal, or because they believed that the frequently-arriving ships of the fishing trade might supply all they needed, the colonists at Aquaforte had not built proper habitations or indeed any other infrastructure for the colony's support during their first year. Whitbourne was forced to move the colony down the shore to the harbor of Renews to ensure their survival. If the Beothuk had had a more significant presence on the Avalon Peninsula during this time, it is possible that a friendly partnership could have supplied the kind of life-saving assistance from which the Plymouth settlers had eventually benefitted.

The first settlers of Plymouth, New England saw a similarly rocky beginning. Unfortunately for the emigrants, they had almost certainly arrived too late in the year to secure sufficient shelter and provision to prevent the disastrous mortality of that first winter. The *Mayflower* passengers who crossed the ocean during the late summer of 1620 did not disembark at Cape Cod until November 9. Without their Wampanoag neighbors, the colony would likely not have survived.

The first colonists at Jamestown fared little better than those at Aquaforte or Plymouth despite the climactic variation, for the warmer, wetter Chesapeake had its own problems. Jamestown was a virulent consumer of English immigrants in its first years due to agricultural inactivity on the part of settlers and the scourge of water-borne

diseases. Life in colonial North America carried the very real threat of death by exposure and disease, and prevention of this was the first concern of those who planned and established the settlements of Ferryland and Cupids, both of which seemed to fare much better throughout their early settlement periods than other contemporaneous colonies.[111]

It is difficult to say why settlements like Ferryland and Cupids saw more successful beginnings than Plymouth, which occupied a highly similar climate in relatively close proximity to the former two, but perhaps it was the result of both meticulous planning and good fortune. The letters from Captain Edward Winne at Ferryland to George Calvert, the letters from John Guy to the investors of the Newfoundland Company, and the journal Guy kept during his years as Cupids' governor all testify to the comparatively milder winters settlers experienced during the first few years on the island, which apparently deceived early settlers about the potential harshness of Newfoundland winters. Winne's successor, Daniel Powell, expressed similarly mistaken impressions about the true extremities of the island's climate. Nicholas Hoskins, a resident of Ferryland in 1622, wrote to a friend of his that the winter he had experienced the previous year was milder than those which one typically experienced in England. Pure luck may have played a role here because the first decades of the seventeenth century saw some of the most notoriously cold winters of the last millennium, particularly in northeastern North America. After George Calvert abandoned what he later termed the "coldest harbor in the land" in 1629, Captain Winne admitted that he had been mistaken in his initial underestimation of the potential harshness of Newfoundland's climate during his tenure as Ferryland's governor. The

[111] Cell, *Newfoundland Discovered*, 22-3; Deetz and Deetz, 4, 36-7.

settlements led by Captain Winne and John Guy clearly benefitted from lucky beginnings. Yet, cautious and strategic planning also played a role here. After all, a mild Newfoundland winter could kill the unsheltered or insufficiently provisioned just as readily as a harsh one.

The founders of Ferryland and Cupids notably recruited specifically skilled and knowledgeable individuals, particularly naval captains with experience of the island. Those whose activities they efficiently directed such as the sawyers, builders, masons, and joiners who arrived with, or in Ferryland's case, before most settlers, likely made for a more secure beginning than would have been possible otherwise. Whereas the majority of Plymouth's first settlers were families, those who arrived first at Ferryland and Cupids were single, experienced professionals, who, unlike the treasure-hunters first sent to Jamestown, had contextually useful skills to deal with their environment and achieve their goals. The relatively milder winter conditions around Conception Bay and the southern Avalon between roughly 1610 and the early 1620s no doubt helped keep colonists healthier but the methodical processes executed sufficiently prior to settlement hinted at lessons learned in earlier colonial experiments like Jamestown. John Guy himself scouted the Newfoundland coastline for an ideal site for Cupids, choosing a sheltered harbor with ready access to fresh water. Perhaps Guy was thinking both of safety from potential attacks by the Beothuk, as Jamestown's first settlements had clashed with the Powhatan Confederacy, and of physical health, which the first settlers at Jamestown had notable trouble maintaining. Some of the investors in the Newfoundland

Company had been involved in the ill-fated initial founding of the Virginia colony four years before and the instructions given to John Guy may have reflected this experience.[112]

In Newfoundland, as in New England and much of northeastern North America, an abundance of fast-flowing, fresh water sources, most proceeding from glacial runoff, provided drinking water of excellent quality. Multiple documentary sources attest to the purity of the island's fresh water sources. Nicholas Hoskins noted that on his first trek into the interior, he and his fellow travelers came across numerous flowing rivers and streams from which they "drank freely." The waters, he claimed, "slaked our thirst better than any beer and never offended our stomachs at all."[113] A more temperate climate and

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[112] Cell, *Newfoundland Discovered*, 6; Edward Winne, "A Letter from Captaine Edward Winne, Governor of the Colony at Ferryland, within the Province of Avalon, in Newfoundland, unto the Right Honourable Sir George Calvert Knight, his Majesties Principall Secretary, July 1622," in Richard Whitbourne, *A Discourse and Discovery of New-found-land* (London, 1622), reprinted in Gillian T. Cell, ed., *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630*, 195-98 (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982), revised by Peter E. Pope, retrieved 20 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/edward-wynne-letter-28-july-1622.php; John Guy, "Letter from John Guy to Sir Percival Willoughby," Nottingham University, Middleton, MSS, Mi X ½, in Gillian T. Cell, ed., *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630* (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982), 61; Daniel Powell, "Another Letter to Master Secretary Calvert, from Captain Daniel Powell, who conducted the new supply of men, that went for the plantation, the last spring, dated at Ferryland, 28th July 1622," in Richard Whitbourne, *A Discourse and Discovery of New-found-land* (London, 1622), reprinted in Gillian T. Cell, ed., *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630*, 198-200 (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982), revised by Peter E. Pope, retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/daniel-powell-letter-1622.php; Nicholas Hoskins, "A Copy of a Letter from N.H. a Gentleman living at Ferryland in New-found-land, to a worthy friend W.P. of the 18 of August 1622," in Richard Whitbourne, *A Discourse and Discovery of New-found-land* (London, 1622), in Gillian T. Cell, ed., *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630*, 204-206 (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982), revised by Peter E. Pope, retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/nicholas-hoskins-letter-1622.php; Lisa M. Hodgetts, "Feast or Famine? Seventeenth-Century English Colonial Diet at Ferryland, Newfoundland," *Historical Archaeology* 40, no. 4 (2006): 127; Taylor, 130-32; Miller, "Avalon and Maryland," 382; Barry C. Gaulton and Aaron F. Miller, "Edward Wynne's *The Brittish India or A Compendious Discourse tending to Advancement* (circa 1630-1631)," *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 24, no. 1 (2009): 118.

[113] Deetz and Deetz, 57; Cell, *English Enterprise in Newfoundland*, location 2203; Nicholas Hoskins, "A Copy of a Letter from N.H. a Gentleman living at Ferryland in New-found-

access to consistently and reliably clean water sources was a decided advantage for more northerly colonies compared to the dangers of water contamination and other climate-related diseases in the Chesapeake and the Caribbean.

The tiny though populous island of Barbados consumed almost as many settlers as Jamestown and the island's white population was dramatically reduced by disease and emigration on a roughly equal basis during the later seventeenth century. In just an eighteen-month period in the 1680s, five hundred and six more Europeans died than were born on Barbados. In addition, the importation of African slaves also introduced African diseases to the island including yellow fever, malaria, yaws, hookworm, guinea worm, leprosy, and elephantiasis. The Caribbean may have quickly become known as a "hell" for white workers in the seventeenth-century but the steadily increasing black population suffered much worse. Enslaved African Barbadians suffered from overwork as well as increasingly much poorer, more vicious conditions than white Barbadian servants. More than a quarter of a million Africans were forcibly brought to the island during the second half of the seventeenth century but only one hundred thousand were left alive in Barbados by 1700. Unlike their New England counterparts who, thanks to their more healthful climate, could often expect to live to seventy and raise an average of seven children, the typical English settler in Barbados was lucky to live past thirty and raise an average of one to two children. If the Barbadian planter described earlier is to be believed – that a planter with a hundred slaves needed to purchase an additional six each year – this suggests a horrifying mortality rate among enslaved Barbadians. The harshness of

land, to a worthy friend W.P. of the 18 of August 1622," retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/nicholas-hoskins-letter-1622.php.

slavery in the sugar industry meant that a significant proportion of enslaved Barbadians survived no more than five years on the island.[114]

Jamestown saw a similar dearth of both settler families and longevity during the seventeenth century. Settlers in the Chesapeake could not expect to live much past forty-five. Similarly plagued by malaria and dysentery, Chesapeake settlers, like their Caribbean counterparts, sustained their population growth only through heavy replacement immigration. One hundred and ninety thousand English colonized the Caribbean and about one hundred and twenty thousand settled the Chesapeake region, both boasting considerably more arrivals than the mere twenty-one thousand who colonized New England. But by 1700, the English population of the West Indies stood at a mere thirty-three thousand, the Chesapeake at eighty-five thousand, while New England had expanded to ninety-one thousand. Further, unlike her more southerly counterparts, much of New England's growth occurred as a result of natural increase.[115]

Like New Englanders, Newfoundlanders suffered fewer diseases and colonists could demonstrate impressive longevity. While the migratory population skewed heavily toward single men, as was the case in the Chesapeake and Caribbean, about two-thirds of mid-to-late seventeenth-century Newfoundland planter households were families with children, so the island's permanent population slowly but steadily expanded thanks to both immigration and natural increase. Non-anecdotal data pertaining to colonial Newfoundland longevity is scarce, but historian Peter Pope theorized that the island's life expectancy was at least as good as Salem, Massachusetts, whose seventeenth-century mortality rate was two-thirds lower than that of their Chesapeake counterparts. Colonial

[114] Dunn, 88, 337-38.
[115] Taylor, 170, 217, 221.

Newfoundlanders, like New Englanders, could likely expect to live into their sixties, seventies, and perhaps even their eighties.[116]

Newfoundland, like New England, has shallower, rockier soil and a shorter growing season than more southerly regions. These geological and meteorological factors have always created significant challenges for residents. However, historian Amanda Crompton asserts that two factors have contributed to a general acceptance of the island as "peripheral" and "marginal": perceptions of the supposed desolation of the island's geographic location, and an unreflective scholarly skepticism around Newfoundland's agricultural potential. Alan Taylor, in one of his few references to Newfoundland, dismissed it as "barren" and asserted that English leaders believed it too cold for year-round habitation, when in fact, many English naval men were advocating for permanent Newfoundland settlement as early as the 1570s.[117] Crompton states that these assumptions have kept historians from seeing that agricultural potential in Newfoundland was not nearly as limited as they have traditionally supposed. The French *habitants* at Plaisance[118] drained the marshes behind Fort Louis and grew crops of artichokes, asparagus, peas, and pumpkins, impressing contemporary officials who had not expected much fertility from the rugged and chilly island. The residents even managed to cultivate kitchen gardens using soil transported to the cobblestone beaches where they lived.[119] The letters of Captain Winne at Ferryland and John Guy at Cupids indicate that both groups of first settlers arrived in the summer, well before the end of the

[116] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 220, 230.
[117] Taylor, 118.
[118] Located on the southernmost section of the Avalon Peninsula and known to English settlers as "Placentia."
[119] Crompton, 54-56, 57, 63.

fishing season, and managed to carry out some successful cultivation of wheat, hay, and vegetables before their first winter in addition to the many other arduous tasks associated with the establishment of a colony.[120] One must acknowledge that Newfoundland's climate and soils could not produce the same levels of fecundity as the Chesapeake or the Caribbean and agricultural yields were not spectacular, but they were certainly adequate to supplement subsistence diets and provide limited fodder until the annual culling of domestic animals.

Household kitchen gardens became staples in the subsistence practices of settlers during the first quarter of the seventeenth century. Root crops tend to show the most agricultural success in Newfoundland. In Ferryland, Captain Winne noted that lettuce, turnips, carrots, cabbages, kale, radishes, beans, peas, and numerous herbs flourished under personal cultivation. To help supplement cultivated produce, residents foraged for seasonal raspberries, strawberries, blueberries, partridgeberries, cranberries, and medicinal plants, all of which continue to grow wild today in Newfoundland. The potato also flourished in Newfoundland when Irish immigrants introduced it to the island in the eighteenth century. These food plants provided sufficient vitamin and mineral intake to help address the colonial curse of scurvy and other dietary deficiencies which might have been mistaken for scurvy.

[120] Guy, "Letter from John Guy to Sir Percival Willoughby," 6 Oct 1610, in Cell, *Newfoundland Discovered*, 60-63; Edward Winne, "A Letter Written by Captaine Edward Winne, to the Right Honorable, Sir George Calvert, Knight, his Majesties Principall Secretary: from Ferryland in Newfoundland, the 26 of August 1621" (London, 1621), reprinted in Gillian T. Cell, ed., *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630*, 253-57 (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982), revised by Peter E. Pope, retrieved 20 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/edward-winne-letter-26-august-1621.php.

The three standard "antiscorbutics" touted by seventeenth-century Europeans in the treatment of "land scurvy," which in reality could have been any number of ailments unrelated to a deficiency in vitamin C, included "scurvy grass" or *Cochlearia officinalis*, water cress, and brooklime. These plants may have grown wild in Newfoundland at the time but it does not appear that they were readily available to early settlements in any but the most trifling amounts. Interestingly however, their absence would not have been a loss to the cause of curing scurvy. Modern testing of these three plants prized as antiscorbutics during the seventeenth century demonstrate that early modern physicians could hardly have chosen any angiosperm or woody species with lower vitamin C content. In his early letters to the investors of the Newfoundland Company, John Guy referenced growths of scurvy grass and other medicinal plants such as yarrow and the "peason"[121] of the region as effective against scurvy.[122]

Many more "antiscorbutics" were recorded by surgeons, proprietors, and other authorities resident in Newfoundland at different times. The wide variety of these "cures" as well as the apparent "unsuitability" of some of them for the treatment of scurvy, according to Galenic theory, suggests that early settlers were called upon to undertake extensive experimentation with native and imported plants to find alternatives to the standard three commonly used, which were likely scarce or unavailable. A piece

[121] Guy was likely referring to beans or peas native to Newfoundland.

[122] Winne, "Letter to Sir George Calvert," 26 August 1621, retrieved 20 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/edward-winne-letter-26-august-1621.php; J.K. Crellin, "Early Settlements in Newfoundland and the Scourge of Scurvy," *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History* 17, no.1 (2000): 132-33; Willeen Keough, *The Slender Thread*: *Irish Women on the Southern Avalon, 1750-1860* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), location 146; R. Elwyn Hughes, "The Rise and Fall of the "Antiscorbutics": Some Notes on the Traditional Cures for 'Land Scurvy,'" *Medical History* 34, no. 1 (Jan 1990): 58-9, retrieved 20 August, 2021. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1036000/?page=1; Guy, "Letter from John Guy to Sir Percival Willoughby," 6 Oct 1610, in Cell, *Newfoundland Discovered,* 62.

of evidence which supports such a supposition is that a majority of the medicinal plants listed as effective against scurvy in various Newfoundland sources are "cold" treatments. Only "hot" treatments were thought to be effective against scurvy, classified as a "cold" disease according to Galenic theory. Therefore, the endorsement of "cold" treatments as effective antiscorbutics suggests that settlers/healers must have tried such various treatments on patients despite conventional wisdom. Then again, if the healer in question were unschooled in the finer points of Galenic theory, they might simply have been using trial and error. John Guy's successor as governor of Cupids, John Mason, reported that by the time eight people had died of scurvy during the winter of 1612-13, the decision was made to try making a tea using turnip roots,[123] which were still frozen under the snow. According to Mason, all of the remaining sick at Cupids were cured.

Sir William Vaughn likewise reported the efficacy of turnips against scurvy in *The Newlanders Cure*, written almost two decades later, as well as boiled radishes, and "nettleseed" mixed with honey and wormwood. While he had received a proprietary grant to found the settlement of Aquaforte, it is unclear whether Vaughn ever journeyed to Newfoundland himself. If not, his mention of the turnip as a cure for scurvy might suggest that settlers' practical knowledge had disseminated amongst British individuals involved in Newfoundland settlement or trade. Most colonial British Newfoundlanders had virtually no contact with the island's indigenous people who might have been able to share their knowledge about the medicinal properties and benefits of certain plants, as was the case in other North American colonies. This forced a process of investigation

[123] Turnips were generally believed to have had "cold" properties according to Galenic theory.

which apparently yielded many alternatives to conventional medical practice. The first governor of Harbour Grace, Robert Hayman, observed that the "agues," fevers, plague, and smallpox which bedeviled other regions did not flourish in the "salubrious" and clear air of Newfoundland. "Yet," he wrote, "scurvy Death stalke here with theevish pace, knocks one downe here, two in another place." Despite the island's perceived marginality, settlers' overall resources for health in many ways seem to have been fairly comparable to those of other colonial communities and in some ways, better.[124]

The diet of the settled Newfoundlander or migratory fisherman was certainly better than those of their working-class counterparts in Europe but comparable to provisions in various Atlantic colonies - apart from seal. The colonial Newfoundlander's diet also incorporated pork, fish, mutton, goat, beef, caribou, poultry, fowl, eggs, wheat, and dairy products, in addition to the produce that their kitchen gardens and the Newfoundland landscape provided. Domestic livestock and regular, supplemental shipments of wheat had to be imported but much else was produced by settlers. Archaeologist and historian Lisa Hodgetts significantly challenges Newfoundland's marginality regarding foodways when she observes that the island's agricultural shortcomings were not the most significant factor in the formation of the settler diet – one that was designed to maximize the consumption of fresh meat.

Examination of the faunal remains of seventeenth-century kitchen middens at Ferryland indicates that the overall diet of residents changed little throughout the study period. Hodgetts cites historian Henry Miller's theory that an increasing reliance on

[124] Crellin, 128-33; William Vaughn, *The Newlanders Cure* (London, 1630), printed by Nicholas Okes, 73, retrieved on 20 August, 2021. https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A14301.0001.001?rgn=main;view=fulltext.

domestic rather than wild species in the colonial Chesapeake diet over time indicates the continued development of greater food security, but she asserts that the consistent consumption of similar percentages of both domestic and wild species by Ferryland residents did not necessarily represent ongoing food insecurity. Herds of domestic livestock such as cattle, sheep, and goats increased noticeably in Newfoundland throughout the century. This is an indicator of growing economic and agricultural success rather than insecurity. Larger herds signal both prosperity and an improved ability on the part of settlers to produce winter fodder. Yet rather than these animals forming a more significant part of the settler diet as herds enlarged, residents instead continued to hunt wild fowl and caribou in the winters and harp seals in early spring when food stores were likely at their lowest. Increasingly, domestic herds were reserved for the dairy items they produced and more rarely for their value of their meat, which could be sold to locals or to migratory fishing crews. Only the wealthiest planters tended to own larger herds. In fact, only 30% of planters kept cattle at all. By the second half of the seventeenth century, domestic herds were largely cultivated for mercantile rather than subsistence purposes. The primary source of meat for the average settler was swine and virtually everyone kept pigs. Unlike cattle, sheep, and goats which required expensive feed, pigs could be sustained on kitchen scraps and fish offal of which there was naturally an abundance. Yet, over time, the Ferryland middens do show a slight decrease in the number of swine consumed and a similar increase in the consumption of sheep, goats, and cattle.

The fact that wild species remained important to the settler diet even as the supply of domestic animals increased stems primarily from the fact that all energy and activity

was devoted to the fishery for five months of the year. The seasonal demands of the fishery meant that there was literally no time for agricultural or husbandry activities after a fourteen-hour, or even a twenty-hour workday spent both pursuing a run of fish and then processing it. With no winter pasture in Newfoundland and no ability to pursue agricultural cultivation during the long winter months, settlers culled all but the best milking and breeding stock of their domestic animals in the fall, preserving the meat. Throughout the winter, settlers would supplement their food stores by hunting.[125]

Meat may have been the staple of the colonial Newfoundlander's diet for both nutritional reasons and for practical reasons related to the seasonal demands of the fishery, but bread occupied an equally important niche in the settled islander's diet and was perhaps the more significant from a cultural perspective. Those who know anything about Newfoundland usually think first of codfish when asked about the region's most culturally significant foods. Bread, however, embodies much more emotional and sentimental connections between Newfoundlanders and their homes and families. The first settlers at Ferryland built a bake/brew house near George Calvert's mansion. "Women would be necessary here," wrote Captain Winne just a few days after his arrival at Ferryland, especially such as were "strong maids who could both brew and bake." The first women recruited for the colony by Captain Winne made soft, home-baked bread for the inhabitants. Since the seventeenth century, bread has remained central to the food culture of Newfoundland.

In many homes, bread and tea accompanied every meal, often with butter and homemade jam. During hard times, bread and tea might constitute the entire meal. Soft

[125] Taylor, x; Hodgetts, 125, 127-29, 133-35; Lounsbury, 608-609.

bread was only one method by which this staple food was prepared. Colonial Newfoundlanders also made and imported hard bread, a more practical and durable variation. Making "toutons" or fried bread dough was a much quicker process than baking soft loaves or buns and these treats are still made and enjoyed by Newfoundlanders today. Stale bread could be repurposed for either a sweet or savory pudding. Of all these variations, the soft, sweet-smelling white bread and rolls, which take the most time and effort to prepare, probably evoke the most meaning and nostalgia among islanders.

Bread in Newfoundland has traditionally been associated with deeply-held religious beliefs and superstitions and the process of baking bread was one that defined Newfoundland womanhood and home life for generations. Many religious beliefs and superstitions around bread developed within the Irish Catholic communities whose presence began to increase on the island beginning in the late seventeenth century. Women might make the sign of the cross over freshly-baked bread which they believed gave it protective powers. A traveler sent forth alone might be given a piece of bread as protection from fairies who might render one "fairy-struck." The bread also served as a talisman, ensuring that the traveler would find their way home. "You're eating your path!" a Newfoundland woman might yell after a departed family member, friend, or other guest as they surreptitiously nibbled on the bread they had been given. Pieces of bread might be tucked into the swaddling clothes of a yet-unbaptized infant to protect them. Bread baked on Good Friday was thought to have miraculous healing powers and some women used it in healing poultices.

Throughout the colonial period, and increasingly during the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries, breadmaking was one of the most important skills learned by Newfoundland women and an activity that was performed daily, sometimes multiple times a day for women with large families. MUN's folklore and language archives feature numerous oral traditions and recollections of bread, made by mothers and grandmothers, as some of the most significant memories tying Newfoundlanders to their homes and families. Many girls learned to bake bread before they could reach the kitchen counter, standing on a crate or stool and receiving instruction from their mothers. Women with the largest families might make seven or eight loaves of bread daily. Knowing that the fire in the stove would eventually go out during the night, conscientious women might take their bread dough to bed with them to keep it warm and ensure that it rose in time for morning baking. Commercial bakeries had arrived in St. John's by the mid-nineteenth century but did not become readily available in the outports until nearly a century later. Home-baked bread therefore remained the norm for many Newfoundlanders until relatively recently and many continue to value and revere the tradition of baking their own bread, preferring it to any store-bought.[126]

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[126] Diane Tye, ""Bread for the Road": Intersections of Food and Culture in Newfoundland and Labrador," *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 26, no. 2 (Fall 2011): 176-80, 182-88; Winne, "Letter to Sir George Calvert," 26 August 1621, retrieved 20 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/edward-winne-letter-26-august-1621.php; Edward Winne, "Another Letter of the 28th of August, from the said Captain Winne, unto Master Secretary Calvert" (London, 1621), reprinted in Gillian T. Cell, ed., *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630*, 253-57 (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982), revised by Peter E. Pope, retrieved 20 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/edward-winne-letter-28-august-1621.php; Edward Winne, "Another Letter to Master Secretary Calvert, from Captaine Winne, of the 17th of August 1622," in Richard Whitbourne, *A Discourse and Discovery of New-found-land* (London, 1622), reprinted in Gillian T. Cell, ed., *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630*, 200-204 (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982), revised by Peter E. Pope, retrieved 25

In addition to adequate shelter, fresh water sources, and a sufficiently varied diet, colonists in the New World needed medical care. It has long been the opinion of Newfoundlanders that there have never been enough doctors in any of the island's settlements and this was certainly true by the early twentieth century, when medicine had evolved into a fully professionalized and masculinized trade and recruiting qualified doctors to the island proved challenging. However, during the colonial period, the first line of medical defense was usually the mistress of the house.

The skills and demeanor associated with healing were generally believed to be inherently feminine qualities in seventeenth and eighteenth-century British societies. Women all over the colonial world were expected to collect and familiarize themselves with medicinal recipes, to cultivate or forage the supplies needed for such recipes, and to understand how to nurse and treat various injuries, complaints, and illnesses. Such knowledge and experience was nurtured through an oral tradition between female relations. More specialized healers including surgeons, midwives, doctors, and "doctoresses" presented more professional options than family-based care and a combination of family and professional care were typically relied upon. However, if the afflicted person had no family readily available or able to care for them, general or unspecialized nursing would usually be carried out by local women who would administer care in conjunction with male or female professionals. Similar conditions prevailed in Newfoundland.[127]

August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/edward-wynne-letter-17-august-1622.php; Keough, *The Slender Thread*, location 161, 243-45.

[127] Rebecca J. Tannenbaum, *The Healer's Calling: Women and Medicine in Early New England* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002), xvi, 7, 14, 22-3; Keough, *The Slender Thread*, location 201.

From the earliest days of the island's settlement, the scarcity of professional medical care meant that female settlers were depended upon to nurse both settled and migratory populations. Most frequently, women received remuneration in the form of cash wages, kind, or credit with their local merchant for providing nursing services to injured or ill migratory fishermen or to single, widowed, or otherwise unconnected residents. Yet, if the patient were too poor to pay anything, care was usually provided free of charge. As networks of reciprocal exchange developed in settled communities, providing nursing services *pro bono* on occasion proved to be increasingly acceptable. Skilled healers were much valued members of their communities. Some were renowned for the quick and clean healing qualities of their poultices or the efficacy of the medicines they prepared. Sometimes they were renowned for exceptional surgical or healing skills. Johanna Jackman Johnson of mid-nineteenth-century Renews famously healed a man who had suffered a gunshot wound to his side, regularly cleaning and dressing the wound and personally supervising his long recovery process. Lieutenant Douglas of the HMS *Phyllis*, which was wrecked near Cape Ray in the fall of 1795, spoke admiringly of the "native doctress" who successfully amputated the limbs of a crewmember with advanced frostbite, saving his life.[128]

Surgeons occupied an important place in colonial Newfoundland communities as well. Fishing was not only exhausting but dangerous work, and "pups" or flesh wounds sustained from mishaps with fishing equipment were common. Generally, surgeons would be the only professionals to perform bloodletting or amputations, but female healers were sometimes skilled in these areas as well. In many cases, male surgeons and

[128] Keough, *The Slender Thread*, location 202-204, 207.

doctors were better paid than female healers or midwives because their remuneration was often deducted from the salaries of migratory or resident fishing crews by an employer who contracted the surgeon's services at the beginning of the season. Beyond the more than adequate wages they earned, the honor accorded surgeons in Newfoundland settlements is perhaps best exemplified by the fact that they regularly served as surrogate judges in the absence of official magistrates and as homicide investigators in the absence of a coroner.[129] In general, the expectations for decent health and well-being were no less reasonable in Newfoundland than anywhere else in the colonial Atlantic and in some cases, better.

In addition to the resources for good health, physical safety was also not necessarily assured for residents of Atlantic colonies. Competition with European rivals for naval supremacy and for control of various North American regions could make life in the colonies uncertain and hazardous. Moreover, European occupation of North America inevitably brought conflict with indigenous North Americans whose exposure to Europeans brought insecurity, disease, violence, and ultimately for many, dislocation and removal from their traditional lands and homes. Newfoundland settlements experienced danger from attack by hostile European forces comparable to that faced by other colonies in the New World. However, what significantly differentiates the region from others is the relative lack of contact between British settlers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the indigenous peoples of Newfoundland.

Relative to their colonial counterparts on the North American mainland and scattered throughout the Atlantic basin, Newfoundlanders experienced comparable

[129] Ibid., location 204, 206; Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 23.

threats to the physical security of their settlements and persons from European rival groups. For English settlements on the North American mainland and those scattered throughout the Caribbean, their most dangerous and persistent rivals during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were the French, which was also the case in Newfoundland, although the residents of St. John's had to defend themselves from more than one attack by Dutch privateers. The first two decades of the seventeenth century also saw intermittent raids by pirates who not only carried away plunder but also sometimes settlers, impressing them into the crew. In an age in which naval power was the most significant measure of military strength, island people were perhaps at a greater disadvantage for defense than mainland-dwelling colonials. There are, after all, fewer places to which one can retreat on an island. On the other hand, with naval power being the ultimate expression of military force, an island might perhaps be more effectively defended than a land-locked settlement, provided the islanders installed strategic and well-equipped defense systems to keep ships from landing invaders at all, or, to destroy them by firing upon them from land, if necessary.

The naval defense of Newfoundland's English Shore was first pioneered by Captain Winne at Ferryland and later, by Sir David Kirke, the settlement's subsequent proprietor after Sir George Calvert's departure. It was Captain Winne who had chosen the Ferryland site for Calvert's colony of Avalon, chiefly for its defensive capabilities, and he gave as much attention to the building of palisades, ramparts, and gun emplacements as he gave to the clearing of land, the planting of crops, or the building of Calvert's mansion house, forge, bake/brew house, or "prettie street." Ferryland's defenses were tested within only a few short years in the Anglo-French War of 1627-

1629. Few particulars are known about how the conflict played out at Ferryland but in 1628, Calvert called the men of the colony into action against a French attack. As well as defending Ferryland harbor, Calvert launched a 360-ton ship with 24 guns and a 60-ton barque with three to four guns, apparently manned by one hundred men. That he was able to mobilize so many on short notice at this early stage of the colony's settlement suggests that both settled and migrant fishermen fought in the battle – yet another example of the essentially cooperative nature of the relationship between the resident and migratory elements in Newfoundland.

Winne had recommended similar fortifications to those at Ferryland be built further north at St. John's and at Trinity which, he claimed, were likewise ideally situated to defend themselves from naval attack. By 1638, Sir David Kirke was installing similar defenses in several harbors stretching from St. John's to the southern tip of the Avalon Peninsula with a heavy emphasis on cannon. It is worth noting that pirate attacks on St. John's, Conception Bay, and the southern Avalon became much less common after the fortification of the English Shore's major settlements. Moreover, only one successful naval invasion of St. John's occurred following the installation of the city's harbor defenses – the 1665 raid by Dutch privateers was successful primarily because the harbor's defenses were temporarily unmanned at the time. No hostile craft has been able to enter St. John's harbor in the centuries since. Improved incarnations of the defenses first installed in the seventeenth century were still guarding St. John's residents on the eve of World War II. Indeed, the English naval defense of Newfoundland throughout the colonial period was so solid that the only successful French invasions of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries came from overland, in attacks launched from

Plaisance with the help of indigenous Abenaki and perhaps also Mi'kmaq allies. These conflicts during the War of the League of Augsburg and the War of the Spanish Succession temporarily depopulated settlements on the mid-to-southern Avalon, but only for a few short years. Records of Ferryland residents indicate that at least a half-dozen families returned to the area almost immediately following the French invasion of the late 1690s. Approximately one third of planter families enumerated in the 1708 census resided at Ferryland prior to the French raid of 1696. Newfoundlanders experienced comparable levels of conflict with European, particularly French, competitors to those of their colonial counterparts in regions like New England and the Caribbean.[130]

The island's migratory fishermen and settlers also experienced sporadic contact with Newfoundland's indigenous people although encounters in general, whether positive

[130] Miller, "Avalon and Maryland," 242, 244, 246-7, 262-3, 272; John Cull, "Deposition [taken at Totnes, before commissioners appointed by the Privy Council]," West Devon Record Office, Plymouth W360/74, in J.J. Beckerlegge, ed., "Plymouth Muniments and Newfoundland," in *Annual Reports and Transactions of the Plymouth Institution* 18 (1945): 2-23, transcribed by P.E. Pope, retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/john-cull-deposition-1667.php; Thomas Cruse, "Deposition [taken at Totnes, before commissioners appointed by the Privy Council]," West Devon Record Office, Plymouth W360/74, in J.J. Beckerlegge, ed., "Plymouth Muniments and Newfoundland," in *Annual Reports and Transactions of the Plymouth Institution* 18 (1945): 2-23, transcribed by P.E. Pope, retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/thomas-cruse-deposition-1667.php; den Boggende, 22-4; Gaulton and Miller, 112-115; William Gilbert, "Ye Strength of Ye Place": Defence Works in the St. John's Narrows, 1638-1780," *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 25, no. 2 (Fall 2010): 198, 200-202, 212; John Clappe, "Petition to William III," Great Britain, PRO, Colonial Office, CO 194/1 (6), 14, CNS Microfilm, transcribed by Peter E. Pope, retrieved 27 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/petition-john-clappe-1697.php; John Norris, "An Account of the Inhabitants in Ferryland and Caplin Bay, 1698," Extract from "An Abstract of the Planters and Boatkeepers and What Voyages They Have Made This Year in Newfoundland, 1698," Great Britain, PRO, Colonial Office, CO 194/1 (125i), 262, CNS microfilm, transcribed by Peter E. Pope, retrieved 27 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/inhabitants-ferryland-caplin-bay-1698.php; John Mitchels, Extract from "A List of the Inhabitants Names, the Number of their Families…Anno. 1708," Great Britain, PRO, Colonial Office, CO 194/4 (76ii), 253-256v, see f. 253, CNS microfilm, transcribed by Peter E. Pope, retrieved 27 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/inhabitants-ferryland-1708.php.

or negative, were markedly less common for the British in Newfoundland than in most other colonies in the Atlantic basin. Newfoundland has been inhabited for at least eight thousand years by various groups of indigenous peoples, including the Dorset people and the Paleo-Inuit, who eventually migrated further north from the island into Labrador. The Beothuk, whose lineage and language were Algonquian like many other first peoples of mainland northeastern North America, are believed to have migrated to Newfoundland sometime in the seventh century, roughly eight hundred years before European fishermen began to exploit the island. A non-agricultural people, the Beothuk were seasonally nomadic foragers who spent summers in coastal areas and winters closer to the island's heavily forested interior, sheltered from the bitter ocean winds. Their virtual absence on the coastal areas of the Avalon Peninsula by the time the region's first colonies were established there might indicate that the duration and intensity of the activities of European migratory fishermen had long since driven the Beothuk from these areas. In fact, archaeological evidence and extremely limited documentary evidence suggest exceptionally minimal contact between the two groups throughout Newfoundland during most of the study period.[131] This makes relations between British and indigenous North Americans in Newfoundland unique in comparison to other Atlantic colonies in the sense that settlers rarely if ever encountered indigenous Newfoundlanders. Yet, the Newfoundland experience echoes that of the broader continent of North America.

[131] Alison J.T. Harris, Ana T. Duggan, Stephanie Marciniak, Ingeborg Marshall, et al, "Dorset Pre-Inuit and Beothuk Foodways in Newfoundland, ca. AD 500-1829," *PLoS One* 14, no. 1 (Jan 2019): 2; Donald H. Holly Jr., Christopher Wolff, and John Erwin, "The Ties that Bind and Divide: Encounters with the Beothuk in Southeastern Newfoundland," *Journal of the North Atlantic* 3 (2010): 33; Peter Rowley-Conwy, "Settlement Patterns of the Beothuk Indians of Newfoundland: A View from Away," *Canadian Journal of Archaeology* 14 (1990): 13-14, 16, 20-21.

Beginning in the late nineteenth century, histories of North America began to emphasize a narrative of indigenous/European relations which cited a steady and continuous destruction and dispossession of native communities and ways of life during the colonial period as European settlement proceeded west. This is true to a significant extent and most particularly during the nineteenth century, when historiographic perspectives acquired this emphasis due to the influence of Indian Removal policies, numerous "Indian wars" between European and indigenous communities, broken treaties, and the creation of the reservation system. However, the conveniently teleological nature of this narrative ignores the fact that throughout the seventeenth century and most of the eighteenth century – virtually the entire colonial period – the indigenous peoples of North America continued to control the vast bulk of the continent and experienced little regular contact with Europeans. Their expansive, centuries-old trade and diplomatic routes which spanned North America, their seasonal subsistence activities and resources, and the alliances and conflicts between different nations and groups continued to exist virtually uninterrupted. Using this rationale, historian John G. Reid has challenged the soundness of the linear narrative of European conquest over indigenous people by asserting that it was European societies which remained peripheral, one might even say "marginal," well into the modern period while indigenous people continued to flourish and to dominate vast territories which European immigrants and their descendants remained long unprepared to penetrate. Moreover, indigenous peoples continued to be the principal gatekeepers to the continent's vast western regions and resources which Europeans on the fringes of the continent relied on for the welfare of their own settlements, just as they relied on ships from Europe and their fellow colonies. As late as

the American Revolution, most English colonies, first established on the edge of the Atlantic nearly two centuries before, had advanced no further than the eastern tip of the Midwest.

Reid's perspective echoes Newfoundland's experience far more than it does any other English Atlantic colonies who experienced near-constant contact, whether positive or negative, with indigenous neighbors. The economic activities of European Newfoundlanders were almost entirely concentrated in southern coastal areas and settlers rarely ventured more than a mile or two into the island's thickly forested interior for resources. This made avoidance of European settlements much easier for the Beothuk who began to seek seasonal coastal and inland dwelling sites in the vast territory further north and west of the much smaller Avalon Peninsula, where the bulk of the European presence was concentrated and continues to be so today.[132]

The first specifically documented encounter between European settlers and the Beothuk in Newfoundland occurred in Trinity Bay. John Guy led a small party northwest from Cupids in 1613 to explore and map a broader section of the island, as well as to try establishing contact with the Beothuk. Guy's party came across a small group of Beothuk men at Bull Arm, where a small finger of land connects the Avalon Peninsula to the much larger northern body of the island. The English later remarked upon the fact that there were no women or children with the Beothuk, but the late fall season during which the contact occurred probably indicates that these men were stragglers from a community which had already departed for their winter residences. The English were fascinated by the Beothuks' clothing and adornments – skin "mantles" with sleeves,

[132] Reid, 12, 235; Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 12.

moccasins, and liberally applied red ochre paint which is believed to have had deep cultural and religious significance. Guy reported the greeting and trading conventions of his hosts with interest including the meal the two parties shared, the dancing, and the tension-breaking laughter that ensued when one Beothuk alarmed the Cupids party by blowing into a bottle. Not much specific communication appears to have taken place but Guy noted that the Beothuk left several furs behind after taking their leave which made the English assume that the Beothuk wished to trade. At the site of their meeting, Guy carefully left behind various small European goods in exchange for the small selection of pelts he took away. On a nearby island which the Cupids party named "Truce Sound," they began to build a house to function as a meeting and trading place with the Beothuk to which John Guy planned to return the following summer. It is possible that Guy might have found a way to communicate to his Beothuk hosts his intention to return but a second meeting never transpired. The Cupids colonists later learned that a group of Beothuk men – perhaps the same group that had first met with Guy's party in the fall of 1613 – had clashed with a group of European migratory fishermen in the area and had been driven away from Truce Sound.

After the unexpectedly rich details of this encounter narrative, the written record falls silent on such events until the Royal Navy missions of the mid-eighteenth century which attempted once again to establish friendly and cooperative relations with the Beothuk. It seems highly likely that nearly two centuries of European coastal activity on the Avalon Peninsula had already driven the bulk of the Beothuk population from the more southerly coastal areas. By the beginning of permanent English settlement, many Beothuk groups had already begun to migrate north and west away from areas of

concentrated European habitation. For nearly a century and a half following the Beothuks' retreat, indigenous and British societies existed almost entirely separately, rarely even glimpsing one another. Beothuk people continued to be nomadic foragers but, following the advent of Europeans, began to choose sheltered bays and harbors in areas further north and west for their summer residences. There they exploited various marine species like seal or fished for salmon in near-coastal rivers. During the winter, Beothuk groups retreated inland to the island's thickly forested interior to exploit terrestrial food sources, particularly caribou, which they followed during the herds' annual migrations and hunted using a system of fence-traps. The Beothuk also continued to flourish in trade throughout this period, mainly with indigenous groups situated around the Gulf of St. Lawrence and perhaps also with the French.[133]

Virtually all other North American colonies experienced more contact with indigenous North Americans than the English and Irish of Newfoundland did, for better or for worse. However, the tenor of European-indigenous relations was often tense and fraught, if not hostile, and friendly, mutually-beneficial partnerships between colonies and native communities were the exception rather than the rule. In the Caribbean, European settlement proceeded with the extinction of the Taino and the Arawak and in Mexico, with the destruction of the Aztec empire. In both the Chesapeake and New England, repeated conflicts dramatically affected European and indigenous populations. King Philip's War in the late seventeenth century quite literally decimated New England, killing nearly ten percent of the region's European inhabitants and roughly a quarter of southern New England's indigenous population. In fact, this terrible conflict still retains

[133] Cell, *Newfoundland Discovered*, 10-12; Sweeny, 283; Harris et al., 3, 17-19; Holly Jr., Wolff, and Erwin, 31; Holly Jr., 134; Peter Rowley-Conwy, 28-29.

the highest per capita casualty rate of any war in American history. There are a few examples of promising beginnings and peaceful cooperation in the colonial record but such accord between indigenous and settler groups usually did not last. Plymouth's first settlers and their Wampanoag neighbors enjoyed half a century of amity and peace after the colony's establishment, perhaps the longest uninterrupted period of accord throughout the study period between any indigenous and European settler groups living in such close proximity to one another. Pennsylvania's first decades were likewise characterized by respectful diplomatic and exchange relationships between native peoples and settlers. These regions were notable for early trends of peace and cooperation but eventually, even treaties and peace agreements honored for decades invariably broke down. European settlement was predicated on the further acquisition of lands and resources, a prospect which could not fail to destroy even the most solid diplomatic relationships with indigenous North Americans.[134]

Throughout the seventeenth century and for most of the eighteenth century, the conflict that accompanied most settlements in the New World was either comparable to or less intense in Newfoundland than in her fellow colonies, meaning that the average settler did not bear the constant burden of military service to fight other Europeans nor face violent conflict with those whose traditional lands they had taken. Likewise, the region's First Nations people remained sovereign unto themselves and somewhat more insulated by both distance and a vast wilderness from the greatest threats to their

[134] Taylor, 38-9, 52-4, 135-6, 195-6, 199-202, 268; Deetz and Deetz, 24, 64; Demos, 15-16; William Penn, Excerpts from "A Letter from William Penn, Proprietary and Governor of Pennsylvania in America, to the Committee of the Free Society of Traders of that Province residing in London" (London 1683): 8, in John McNamara, "Lesson Plan," retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.gilderlehrman.org/sites/default/files/inline-pdfs/William%20Penn%20and%20Colonial%20America.pdf.

continued prosperity, health, and well-being – foreign pathogens and the loss of lands and resources to European immigrants. It is true that the Beothuk had been essentially forced out of the Avalon Peninsula, certainly from the region's coastal areas, by the early seventeenth century. Yet they managed to survive and even flourish for an additional century and a half before European settlements and activities began to encroach once again on Beothuk territory.

Archaeologists estimate pre-European contact Beothuk populations at roughly five hundred to seven hundred individuals. Since their population had never been particularly high, the Beothuk were dramatically impacted by increased exposure to Europeans by the late eighteenth century. The Beothuk then began to experience the conflicts, interruptions to resources, and overexposure to foreign diseases which many native groups living in close proximity to European colonies had experienced and suffered from during the previous two centuries. By the late eighteenth century, their population had fallen to perhaps only three hundred and fifty individuals. Competition with English and French Newfoundlanders over hunting/trapping grounds and the riverine salmon fishery, the collapse of key foodways, and increasing exposure to unfamiliar pathogens created hideously tragic consequences for the Beothuk during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, culminating in their extinction.

An emerging concern for the survival of the so-called "noble savage," also evident in other North American communities during this time of widespread crisis for the continent's indigenous peoples, was likewise common among the liberal reformers of early nineteenth-century Newfoundland. Beginning in the mid-to-late eighteenth century, naval expeditions were launched to establish closer, and hopefully friendlier, contacts

with different Beothuk bands with varying results. British authorities in Newfoundland urged settlers to cultivate peaceful relations with any native people they encountered but competition over resources became increasingly bitter over time and violence between European settlers and indigenous groups more common. The newly-formed Beothuk Institute also began to document the language, culture, and oral histories from remaining indigenous Newfoundlanders but these efforts were in many ways too little too late. Archaeologist Donald Holly Jr. argues that the unpredictability of the indigenous/European contact experience in Newfoundland undoubtedly contributed to the extended distance between two cultures. This distance may have helped Newfoundland's native people to remain fairly healthy, prosperous, and sovereign unto themselves for most of the colonial period unlike some of their mainland indigenous counterparts, but Holly believes that this distance may have also paradoxically contributed to the Beothuk's ultimate demise. Closer contact between cultures might have stimulated better immunity to diseases from subsequent generations. More community interaction and cultural exchange might have encouraged an integration of European and indigenous societies, even with the conflicts which invariably accompanied them. A whole world and society, which may now never be fully understood, vanished utterly when a Beothuk woman named Shawnadithit, believed to have been the last of her people, died of tuberculosis in a St. John's hospital in 1839.[135]

[135] Harris et al., 19-20; Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 13-14; Holly Jr., Wolff, and Erwin, 31-2.

CHAPTER V

GENDER RELATIONS

Many female European immigrants who crossed the Atlantic during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries gained benefits which their counterparts back home could not boast including more freedom to exercise influence in public spaces and broader, more economically advantageous marriage prospects. Further, while judicial spaces remained primarily a male domain, women also enjoyed greater legal rights and more significant access to the courts than their female counterparts in the mother country. The same demand for labor which provided higher wages for male servants, artisans, and producers in the New World than in Europe also worked in the favor of European women who found more varied and lucrative employment prospects than were possible in their countries of origin. In some ways, women in colonial Newfoundland likely found their experiences and roles comparable to their counterparts throughout the New World but in others, perhaps, more advantageous, particularly regarding economic agency, access to justice, legal rights, and sexual freedom. Additionally, working-class women enjoyed a greater breadth of these benefits than their middle-class counterparts, especially with the advent and strengthening of the paradigm of female domesticity in British societies near the end of the colonial period.

Newfoundland's capital city, St. John's, has its share of commemorative monuments which represent the region's history and sense of its own identity. Various notable contributors to Newfoundland's political and cultural life and the numerous soldiers of the two World Wars stand enshrined and honored in several downtown public locations. But a different sort of monument stands in front of the St. John's Convention Centre on New Gower Street – an aluminium casting of two humbly-dressed women carrying a *barras*[136] heavily laden with dried fish. This installation is particularly indicative of regional identity because this is not a monument dedicated to a specific person but rather to an undeniably iconic image which represents the experience of a majority of Newfoundland women in past centuries. Indeed, women were intimately involved in the work of the fishery throughout the colonial period, typically as managers of domestic and household responsibilities during the early seventeenth century, but increasingly over time, as shore crew members or processors of dried salt cod. Crises in the Newfoundland fishery in the late seventeenth century and periodically during the eighteenth century facilitated a slow transition from the heavy and predominant use of hired labor to household or family labor in which women played roles as essential and requiring as much skill as men. These increasingly widespread practices blurred gender lines surrounding labor and legal status and gave women a position of honor and respect within families and the broader society, with wives commonly viewed as the partners and equals of their husbands rather than as 'helpmeets.' Today, the image of the brisk, hardy,

[136] A conveyance resembling an open litter.

able, and cheerful working-class woman is one in which most Newfoundlanders see shades of their own female ancestors.[137]

Like their colonial European sisters elsewhere in North America, Newfoundland women were expected to manage the domestic labor and household production which kept the fishing settlements healthy and fed. Women's daily work could include digging, clearing, planting, or harvesting agricultural goods, chopping and hauling wood, hauling water, foraging for native plants for both food and medicines, tending domestic animals and kitchen gardens, brewing, baking, cooking, washing, mending, and caring for children – daily activities that women across the colonial Atlantic would have been familiar with in at least a supervisory if not an entirely active capacity. Additionally, like elsewhere in the New World, female settlers were considerably rarer than male ones and young, single women with no dowries would have found it just as easy as their colonial sisters elsewhere to find a husband.[138]

Because only about one fifth of the mid-to-late seventeenth-century overwintering population in Newfoundland was female, influential seventeenth-century planters sought to recruit more female settlers to encourage migratory fishing servants to become permanent residents. An increase in the colonial female population tended to bring more stability and permanence to local populations as transients demonstrated more willingness to become residents if they had firm marriage prospects. Such population and stability patterns were similarly evident in other colonial contexts including New England, the Chesapeake, and New France. In the early seventeenth century, the more

[137] Willeen Keough, "Good Looks Don't Boil the Pot": Irish-Newfoundland Women as Fish (-Producing) Wives," *Signs* 37, no. 3 (Spring 2012): 536-37; Keough, *The Slender Thread*, location 142-45.

[138] Keough, *The Slender Thread*, location 138-40; Demos, 85-6.

family-oriented New England showed more stability with a male-to-female ratio of six to four while Chesapeake communities demonstrated highly tenuous permanence with a male-to-female ratio of four to one. As a result of these early population patterns, early female emigrants to North America could more easily and advantageously secure matches before gender ratios began to show more balance.

During the eighteenth century, female immigration to Newfoundland from Britain, particularly Ireland, began to increase, bringing greater permanence and stability to Newfoundland settlements and regional populations, just as the presence of women tended to do in other North American colonies. One of the most noteworthy examples of a working-class female immigrant finding greater advantage in colonial Newfoundland is Mary Kirke. Mary emigrated to Ferryland during the late seventeenth century to work as a servant to Lady Frances Hopkins, sister to Lady Sara Kirke. Amid a storm of family protest, Mary wed David Kirke II, the second son of Sir David and Lady Sara. After the French attack on Ferryland in the late 1690s left her a widow, she married the wealthy St. John's merchant James Benger within a year. Mrs. Benger would eventually petition the courts to have her first husband's property, the Kirke plantation at Ferryland, awarded to her. Mary ended her days presiding over one of the English Shore's richest plantations in the very community where she had begun as a servant. Of course, this rather remarkable example does not represent the experience of most working-class female immigrants. However, historian Willeen Keough has observed that while most middle-class and elite Newfoundlanders tended to marry among their own class, it was quite common for female servants to gain social elevation by marrying and cohabiting with merchants and planters, a fairly predictable outcome of the gender imbalance which persisted in colonial

Newfoundland's population until the mid-eighteenth century. To the modern observer, such arrangements may very well appear sexually exploitative because of the gross power imbalance they suggest. However, closer examination of colonial women's experience in the Newfoundland context can reveal a more nuanced perspective. The census of 1800 for the town of Brigus South confirms that planter, John Sloan, and his former female servant, Anstice Dwyer, were living together in a common law relationship. Yet, court records confirm that only three years previously, Anstice successfully sued John and his agents for the unpaid balance of her wages.[139] This anecdote paints an interesting and somewhat unexpected picture of women's position and freedoms in colonial Newfoundland, freedoms which influenced multiple aspects of women's lives.

Newfoundland women could demonstrate impressive economic agency and independence, regardless of their marital status. Both married and single women emigrated from Europe to settle in Newfoundland but the vast majority of unmarried female emigrants were working-class, often referred to as "shipped girls," or those who had signed "shipping papers" with employers detailing their duties, term of service, and wages. These industrious and enterprising young women were recruited mostly for domestic service initially, but crises in the Newfoundland fishery functioned to broaden women's roles and importance in the industry. European wars, subsequent trade interruptions, and periodic decline in cod stocks reduced the wealth of many of Newfoundland's larger planters who, beginning in the eighteenth century, could no longer to afford to hire so many migrant workers. Thereafter, female family members began to pick up the slack within fishing operations with reduced hiring ability.

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[139] Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 9; Taylor, 169, 366; Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 215, 217, 301-302; Keough, *The Slender Thread*, location 69, 173, 176-79, 425.

By the nineteenth century, the inshore migratory fishery was disappearing and virtually all producers were now residents. During the eighteenth century, as family production began to replace the larger migratory crews, working-class women were increasingly hired to "make fish" as other female members of the employer's family did. In many cases, "shipped girls" were hired to free up the mistress of the house from domestic tasks so that she could work in the family business in which she saw herself as having an equal stake alongside her husband. As such roles for women became more common, it was not unusual for fishermen's wives, daughters, and hired female servants to fill the roles on shore crews previously held by shipmasters, boatmasters, and skilled workers, like headers, splitters, and salters, all of whom had been paid some of the best salaries to be had for the Atlantic working-class. It was not typical for women to go out on boat crews. Some speculate that the weight of a line of cod would have been too heavy for a woman or that fishing presented too great a danger for women. However, it is far more likely, as one southern Avalon resident put it, that women "had enough to do" making fish, managing accounts, caring for children, and tending to domestic tasks to be taking on fishing as well. Still, these conditions did not denigrate the value of women's work compared to the predominantly male work of fishing. Men's and women's labor were viewed as complementary, making equal contributions to mutual prosperity. Women's transition into traditionally male work routines fairly early on during the colonial period meant that the gender division of labor in Newfoundland was far less strictly drawn than in most other New World colonies.

Elsewhere in European North America, in contrast, women's paid work opportunities grew rarer and more stigmatized throughout the colonial period. Further,

while women's domestic work was arguably as essential to the survival and prosperity of families and settlements, it was widely considered to be of negligible value compared to the labors of men. Employment opportunities for women in French Canada, for example, declined throughout the colonial period both in and of themselves and compared to men's opportunities. Nineteenth-century census data for the region only measure the value produced by the crops and husbandry associated with men's work, ignoring the value added by women's household production.[140] While Newfoundland women shared the traditional responsibility for domestic environs with their colonial sisters elsewhere in North America, the lack of clear gender divisions of labor in the fishery gave women greater respect, freedom, and economic agency in their local communities because of the acknowledged value and necessity of the work they performed.

Most women of business somehow engaged in and supported the fishing trade and there were many ways to participate in and benefit from the island's economy, even if one did not own boats or fishing premises. Some women did indeed own fishing "rooms" and boats in their own right, either managing them personally or renting out their beach space, stages, cookrooms, and accommodations to migratory or resident fishermen. Many women ran shops, inns, or taverns. The majority of such women would have had licenses to sell liquor also, since anyone who owned either a shallop or any sort of hospitality enterprise would have been frequently called upon to dispense liquor. Most women who administered or owned such commercial or hospitality concerns were either married or widowed. Single women, however, also actively engaged in business and venture opportunities. Single, working-class women in colonial

[140] Keough, *The Slender Thread*, location 145, 154; Cadigan, *Hope and Deception*, xi-xii; Sweeney, 293.

Newfoundland almost always had diversified incomes. Because such work could be balanced with household and childcare routines, women might take in washing and sewing for fishing crews, families, or other community clients. They might work on stageheads "making fish" with shore crews. They might sell products from small holdings they owned such as livestock and lands. The female beneficiary of a small meadow or pasture and a few domestic animals might also supplement her income by selling eggs, dairy products, hay, or other agricultural products. Like their colonial counterparts, Newfoundland women had access to few "professions" but midwives and healers, who were invariably female as was the case elsewhere in North America, were paid wages which closely approximated those of a full-time male fisherman.[141]

In general, women in colonial British societies had a more visible presence in law courts than their counterparts in the mother country, and the degree to which women assumed a right of access to justice was particularly pronounced among the working-class community on the southern Avalon Peninsula, between Bay Bulls in the north, St. Mary's to the south, and Plaisance/Placentia to the west. By the mid-eighteenth century, a near-majority of the population of the southern Avalon was working-class, Irish, and Catholic, and despite persistent class and ethnicity divides, an assimilation of the middle class, heavily represented by English Protestants, into working-class Irish customs was well-underway within the broader community. Keough suggests that this cultural diffusion, combined with an awareness of the essential nature of working-class women's labor in the fishery, upon which the whole region's economy depended, may have influenced the treatment of women in the legal sphere as well as the larger society.

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[141] Keough, *The Slender Thread*, location 138, 172-75, 179, 186, 191-95, 202, 205; Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 56.

Early modern Irish women tended to have more freedom of economic agency than English women in general, and such customs migrated and flourished along with Irish immigrants to Newfoundland. Because the island's settlements featured minimal social differentiation, daily interactions between middle-class men and working-class men were common, as were those between middle-class men and working-class women. The clearest class divisions in colonial society on the southern Avalon existed between middle-class women, who were increasingly embracing the withdrawal from public spaces and moving into a near-exclusive sphere of domesticity, and their working-class counterparts who, in contrast, maintained a near-constant public presence in their communities. According to judicial records, working-class women were a far more visible presence in the courts. What is more, the majority of these women represented themselves before magistrates and judicial surrogates whereas male family members invariably represented middle-class women. In some cases, plebeian women might even represent their own husbands in court. Working-class women on the southern Avalon actively sought redress from the courts as creditors and debtors. Indeed, since it was usually the mistresses of fishing households who were responsible for managing the accounts, women were mindful of their equal stake in the family enterprise and regularly handled these matters personally. These women also regularly came before the court on criminal matters, typically assault, in which case a woman was as likely to be an aggressor as a victim. The considerable number and public nature of such cases illustrates that many plebeian women were confident that they had a right to defend themselves, their reputations, or their interests, even in the streets.

Keough also notes that women's testimony before the courts was regularly accepted without corroboration, although she observes that court authorities readily believed most male complainants as well. A broad majority of women seeking unpaid wages successfully sued employers or, failing that, the merchants with which employers made contracts. They actively sought and received justice for assaults upon their persons, property, or reputations. Women in other colonies likewise had a greater presence in the courts of North America than in the mother country, particularly in New England. However, the persistence of public freedom for women on the southern Avalon makes Newfoundland unique in the broader colonial context. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when women's presence in North American courts was decreasing, as was the case in New York, or becoming increasingly oriented only toward women's roles or interests as wives and mothers, as was the case in the Chesapeake, working-class women on the southern Avalon were representing themselves before magistrates and surrogates with every conviction of their right to seek redress from the law on their own behalf.[142]

Another metric for illustrating women's relatively greater advantage in Newfoundland relative to other British and colonial jurisdictions concerns their legal rights. Women could own and operate businesses as *feme sole* although, like the women of New England, those Newfoundland women who owned significant holdings in their own right tended to be widows. Moreover, magistrates and judges were highly selective in invoking the principle of coverture in most legal matters. In fact, local conditions, customs, and practices consistently resulted in the principle of coverture being waived or

[142] Keough, *The Slender Thread*, location 300, 310, 317-19, 330, 347, 353, 375, 407, 429, 453, 465, 486; Demos, 85-6; Deetz and Deetz, 106, 110.

disregarded altogether. This is clearly exemplified by the strong presence of women in southern Avalon courts and their tendency to represent themselves, and sometimes, their husbands and families also. A wife might be issued a liquor license only in her husband's name, but such examples of coverture regularly obscured women's primary roles in the running of such businesses. Elenor Evoy Welsh of Ferryland operated the same tavern throughout two consecutive marriages during which her liquor license was issued first in one husband's name, and then the other. Yet, it was Elenor who consistently administered the business, managed the accounts, and appeared in court to defend herself, her employees, and her establishment against the slanders of irate patrons and to seek redress for their abuses against her. In addition, unlike other British jurisdictions, primogeniture was not commonly practiced and daughters benefitted from much fairer testation and inheritance customs.

Whether propertied heads of families died with or without a will, lineal female descendants were almost always preferred for inheritance over any more distantly-related male heir. Keough observes that the inheritances of elite and middle-class women in England tended to be heavily affected by the practice of primogeniture. However, working-class English women, particularly those who lived and worked in household economies where men and women carried out productive work together, were more likely to inherit a relatively equitable share of parental estates along with their brothers. This was also true of the working class in Ireland. Most immigrants to Newfoundland during the colonial period hailed from a tradition of partible inheritance according to the principle of *share and share alike*.[143] These influences almost certainly helped to shape

[143] Keough, *The Slender Thread*, location 138, 196-7, 223, 312, 379, 381, 416-17.

the unique legal status of Newfoundland women which was perhaps closer to a state of gender equity than was typical, not only in British jurisdictions but also in European ones in general.

A sole female beneficiary from the English or Irish working classes would sometimes inherit property with *sole use* provisions in order to ensure that her control of the property would not fall to that of a future or current husband. The thoroughly working-class character of Newfoundland fishing communities likely contributed to the transplantation of such customary practices to the island during the colonial period. This is not to say that daughters and sons always inherited equally from their parents' estates, but testation and inheritance practices showed a strong emphasis on ensuring that all surviving family members were as well and equitably provided for as possible. There were typically differences between the types of bequests made to males and those made to females. Male heirs were more likely to inherit fishing premises and equipment while daughters inherited cash, livestock, and moveable property. Men were therefore more likely to be testators than women because they inherited real property far more frequently. However, records from the study period of Keough's book, from 1750 to 1860, reveal seventy-seven women of the southern Avalon who either inherited real property or a life interest in real property as direct beneficiaries of wills, or from deeds of gift or deeds of conveyance during their testator's lifetime. As was the case in some working-class communities in England and Ireland, some Newfoundland heiresses inherited with *sole use* provisions which ensured that they, and not their husbands, would retain control of their property. Even an heiress's husband or her widower could not use property or assets legally bequeathed to her without her consent. Moreover, women who

were given only a life interest in real property might also be given power over its eventual disposal. One testator, John Bole of Ferryland, bequeathed his estate to his brother's widow, giving his sister-in-law permission to disinherit her children if they failed to treat her kindly for the remainder of her life and authorized her, in that case, to dispose of the estate to whomever she thought worthy. Laurence Tobin of Witless Bay left similar instructions to his own widow regarding two of his sons.[144] Perhaps the most telling example of women's relatively equitable legal status with regard to property and inheritance was in the case of intestacies.

Conventions in Newfoundland resembled those of other British jurisdictions in that the estate of a married male property owner who died without a will would be divided among his wife and children with his wife receiving her "widow's third" and the children receiving the remaining two-thirds of the estate. Yet, because primogeniture and impartible inheritance tended to characterize testation practices in many British communities, widows would usually only inherit a life interest in their third-share, leaving the bulk of the estate, particularly real property, to be passed on intact to the eldest son with perhaps smaller bequests given to younger sons and female children. This was the common English custom, particularly among the middle and upper classes. However, customs in Newfoundland were heavily influenced by immigrants of the Irish and English working classes who not only observed the "widow's third,"[145] but who also tended to divide estates fairly equally among surviving children of both genders whether their parents had died intestate or with a will. Again, there were differences in the types

[144] Ibid., location 381-2, 386-91, 406.

[145] Working-class English and Irish widows also usually received only a life interest in estates, but unlike middle-class and elite women, were sometimes given full ownership.

of property most commonly bequeathed to males and females but Newfoundland intestacies often broke down even these gender barriers by requiring that, minus the widow's third, the remaining two-thirds of estates be divided equally between all children, male and female. What is more, Newfoundland law treated indivisible real property as divisible *chattels real* in the case of intestacies, overcoming the legal principles of primogeniture, impartible inheritance, and coverture in one fell swoop. It is important to note that the significant reduction of gender discrimination in inheritance was not a specific goal in these developments but the laws in Newfoundland did function to produce more equitable practices. Clearly, providing for surviving spouses and children was much more important among most Newfoundland families than passing on their estates, intact, to the eldest son only. Keough theorizes that these fairly equitable legal conditions between men and women derived from practices among the working classes of England and Ireland but may also have also been influenced by working-class women's growing importance to the economy of Newfoundland's fishery throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[146] Moreover, similar customs and practices became common among middle-class Newfoundland families as well as working-class ones and among English Protestants as well as Irish Catholics.

Middle-class women in Newfoundland generally received a fairly equal share in parental estates and sometimes with *sole use* provisions. However, the principle of coverture was more frequently observed in the administration of middle-class and elite women's property and inheritance, and thus they tended more to be "passive" property-holders. The heads of wealthier families with extensive property and assets such as

[146] Keough, *The Slender Thread*, location 380-84, 389-90, 397, 406-7, 409-11, 415-17.

mercantile, planter, or judicial elites rarely died intestate and therefore the equal division of real property as chattels real did not usually occur among them. Yet, their wills do tend to show a conscious effort towards fairly equitable division of estates and equal care for male and female children. Again, male heirs tended to be preferred for real property, particularly fishing premises, but female children also regularly inherited real property such as houses and lands. In the absence of sons, daughters were still preferred to any male next of kin. Generally, the heiresses of middle-class or wealthier families received their shares of parental estates as deeds of gift just prior to marriage which softens the fact that some female children may not appear in their parents' wills. If left unmentioned, they likely had already been provided for before the testator's death. The much heavier presence in Newfoundland of working-class Irish women as testators than middle-class English women is very telling, however. It indicates that while middle-class and elite women benefitted from the more egalitarian approach of the Irish and English working classes in inheritance practices, they enjoyed somewhat less economic agency, inclusion, and legal rights compared to working-class women.[147]

Another advantage enjoyed by plebeian women in colonial Newfoundland was their relative sexual freedom compared to their British and colonial counterparts around the Atlantic. Indeed, working-class women of the southern Avalon seemed to have more freedom even than their middle-class neighbors to cohabit, enter into informal marriages, and secure separation and maintenance agreements from the courts without significant public censure or judgment. According to the records of the southern Avalon, appeals for maintenance of wives and children in this region were usually readily granted and there is

[147] Ibid., location 381, 386, 392-6, 399, 406-408, 415.

little evidence to indicate that any wife ill-treated by her husband was pressured to remain in her marriage, or to remain celibate after separation at the risk of losing either financial support or custody of her children as was predominantly the case in other British jurisdictions. Keough asserts that judges and magistrates were much more receptive to women and their concerns than was the case in other British societies. According to English law, a woman was not strictly speaking a person. As a single woman, she was the property of her father or male guardian and when married, was subsumed in the person of her husband. Her body, her property, her domestic services, and her sexual services belonged to him alone. In most British jurisdictions, unsanctioned sexual activity, premarital or extramarital, could be met with legal action on the part of the male guardian or husband against the man involved. Fathers usually launched seduction suits, sometimes to recoup the cost of a daughter's lost labor or the costs of her pregnancy and lying-in. Husbands could launch consortium suits for "criminal conversation" or "enticement" to adultery. The women involved would likely be fined, publicly punished, or otherwise disgraced. Newfoundland women on the southern Avalon had quite different experiences.[148]

Seduction lawsuits were relatively common to English colonies, yet only one seduction case survives in the records of the southern Avalon between the mid-eighteenth and the mid-nineteenth century. Contemporary Canadian settlements rarely saw bastardy suits initiated and even more rarely saw them succeed. In contrast, at least nine bastardy cases were launched personally by women on the colonial southern Avalon. This might demonstrate that unsanctioned sex was of far less concern to legal authorities than in

[148] Ibid., location 420, 422-5, 430-31.

other British jurisdictions and that single mothers felt entitled to seek maintenance for illegitimate children without fear of punishment or disgrace. In virtually all cases in which the verdicts of proceedings are known, female plaintiffs in bastardy cases prevailed and were awarded financial support. It was a common practice for Newfoundland authorities to garnish the wages of the child's father for this purpose. In one case, the father had fled the island upon learning of the bastardy suit and the court ordered his employer to pay his remaining wages to the plaintiff. Newfoundland authorities shared with their more southerly colonial counterparts the concern that unsupported mothers and their illegitimate children not become a "charge" on the community. Keough however, theorizes that both cultural diffusion and the importance of working women's labor to the entire economy of the region significantly influenced the more inclusive and dignified treatment of women before the courts and perhaps also the generally more "*laissez faire*" attitude towards women's sexuality. The fact that more bastardy cases do not appear in the records might indicate that economic resources and employment for single women, even single mothers, were accessible and sufficient enough that they might not have needed to enlist the law to seek financial support. For example, it was not unusual for mothers making fish on stageheads to lay their children down to sleep in nearby puncheon tubs while they worked.[149]

Among the English and Irish working classes, particularly in rural areas of the British Isles, informal marriages and cohabitation were fairly common compared to their middle-class and elite counterparts. Irish women tended to enjoy more public freedom in general than English women and, like working-class Newfoundland women, routinely

[149] Ibid., location 145, 427, 429-35.

smoked, drank, and settled disputes and conflicts, sometimes physical ones, in public spaces. These characteristics indicate a far less proscribed existence for working-class women than the expectations of fragility, passivity, and gentility expected from middle-class and upper-class women, especially as the influence of female domesticity increased. The sexual conventions of the working class might reflect less concern for property and inheritance than was the case among middle-class and elite families whose daughters' virginity, valuable in the upper-class marriage market, they assiduously guarded. The virginity, or lack thereof, of a rural working class English or Irish woman was not likely to complicate her future marriage prospects or social standing in communities where informal unions like "broomstick weddings," "handfastings," and "smock weddings" were familiar practices. The convention of informal marriage and cohabitation migrated to colonial Newfoundland with working-class immigrants.

The importance and respect attributed to working women's roles and labor might have influenced the judicial permissiveness around female sexuality and the larger community's acceptance of it as a cultural convention. One of the best pieces of evidence for the comparatively greater sexual freedom of rural working-class women on the southern Avalon is that no records survive for any cases of infanticide or concealment of birth as they do in other British or colonial jurisdictions. The fact that such cases usually involved working-class women such as servants in most regions demonstrates that the southern Avalon is a special case, in which women did not fear the repercussions of pregnancy to the extent that they might resort to concealment or infanticide. If one

could seek a maintenance agreement without punishment or disgrace, then hiding a pregnancy is much less necessary.[150]

All of this should not suggest that female sexuality was not regulated to some degree in Newfoundland as was the case in Europe or in other Atlantic and North American colonies. In two reported cases of sexual assault on the southern Avalon, the charges were dismissed and the complainants themselves found to be at fault. The two women, Mary Keating and Catherine Power, were found to be women of "infamous character," and were transported from the colony. There were evidently some boundaries for sexual behavior and the sexual reputations of Keating and Power were likely not only seen as threats to the community's social order, but also persuaded authorities that their allegations of sexual assault could not be credible. Details surrounding these two cases are scarce but it is clear that authorities wished to exert a certain measure of control over more flagrant expressions of female sexuality.

It is therefore interesting that no convictions for prostitution survive in southern Avalon records which some might consider strange for a region of seaports with many migrant workers. Further, roughly half of sexual assault allegations brought by women were readily believed by authorities and defendants were punished accordingly. While this percentage might seem grossly inadequate to the modern observer, such a rate of conviction was significantly greater than most other British jurisdictions. Rape cases tended to emphasize the victim as a potential seductress and question what she might have done to invite the violence. Such treatment of plaintiffs in sexual violence cases seems to have been rarer on the southern Avalon. Domestic violence likewise seems to

[150] Ibid., location 423, 425-7, 429, 436.

have been treated with seriousness. Four recorded cases of domestic violence against women survive in the southern Avalon records of the study period for which two of the verdicts are known. In neither case was an abused wife ordered to remain in her marriage as was common in other British societies. Separation and maintenance agreements were ordered in both cases.[151]

For southern Avalon women, court-sanctioned separations and maintenance agreements were not strewn with pitfalls which could cause the court to withdraw awarded support or revoke a mother's custody of her children, which was common elsewhere in British and colonial communities. In fact, multiple cases exist in the legal records of the southern Avalon in which women sought support for children from estranged fathers while already cohabiting with new partners. Some mothers sought maintenance only for their children rather than themselves, indicating that they might have an independent income, might be cohabiting with a new partner, and/or that they had voluntarily left their marriage with no expectation of spousal support.

All of these fairly loose conditions around marriage and sexuality should not suggest that formal marriages were not the norm in Newfoundland. Keough notes that in 1800, only about twenty percent of unions in southern Avalon communities could be considered informal or common law. Clergy were fairly scarce on the island, but there were several options throughout the colonial period for those who wished to observe more formal marriage conventions. During the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries, weddings were performed primarily by naval captains, judges, magistrates, and laypeople of community distinction, even women. Church-sanctioned

[151] Ibid., location 437-41, 444-5.

weddings were rarer in the colonies than in the mother country in general, but perhaps even rarer in colonial Newfoundland. It is important to note, however, that such social and sexual freedom was not common or as readily accepted within the culture of Newfoundland's middle-class or more elite residents. By the nineteenth century, the culture of female domesticity was becoming increasingly entrenched in Newfoundland's more privileged classes and just as such women tended not to appear in court on their own behalf, their sexuality was likewise as muted as their public presence. No records survive on the southern Avalon of any sexually-related legal proceeding concerning middle-class or elite women such as rape, domestic violence, or bastardy suits. This does not mean that middle-class and upper-class Newfoundland women did not have these experiences but the domestic veil and the principle of coverture were powerful influences in these women's lives in ways less familiar to working-class women and therefore, their experiences are less visible.[152]

Working women on the southern Avalon benefitted from economic, legal, and sexual freedoms which their female counterparts of all classes across the colonies often did not. As the paradigm of female domesticity, fragility, and passivity became more dominant in both western Europe and the colonies, women began to retreat even further from paid work as well as from public spaces and interactions. Even in Ireland, where women's public freedoms had been most notable prior to the nineteenth century, the collapse of the potato and textile industries dealt a fearful economic blow to women's employment and prosperity. At the same time, both the Catholic Church and proponents of female domesticity were intensifying attempts to curtail the sexual freedom of rural

[152] Ibid., location 426, 447-53, 501-502.

working-class women.[153] The rural outport culture of the southern Avalon probably offered working women greater inclusivity, equity, opportunity, and freedom than was possible for them elsewhere in the eighteenth and early nineteenth-century Atlantic basin.

[153] Ibid., location 429.

CHAPTER VI

PERSONAL LIBERTY

In comparison to several Atlantic colonies, Newfoundland has regularly been noted for its lack of formal institutions during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries such as a colonial legislature, comprehensive justice system, educational institutions, or religious institutions. Due to the open-source nature of the fishery which required that vast amounts of coastline, the only truly profitable lands on the island, be made available to both seasonal crews and permanent settlers engaged in the industry, neither did Newfoundlanders have the right to acquire real freehold property as settlers in most other Atlantic colonies could. This relative institutional dearth and the barriers to the ownership of real property have traditionally been cited as support for the assertion of Newfoundland's marginality or failure as a colonial enterprise. The heavily nationalist traditional historiography, strongly influenced by the conflict thesis, has typically decried the prohibition of property ownership and the long-standing lack of institutions as representing attempts by imperial and merchant interests to monopolize the fishery and keep settlers from competing or taking control of the island's interests.[154] This perspective has a measure of truth to it but multiple scholars have challenged this package of ideas since Keith Matthews published his seminal essay "Historical Fence

[154] Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 5-6; Lounsbury, 607-608.

Building" in the 1970s, demonstrating that development of both settlement and the fishery proceeded nonetheless and in an undirected "vernacular" manner.[155]

Imperial authorities certainly prioritized the economic benefits of the fishery above the development of Newfoundland settlements. However, their reluctance to grant colonial and state-building institutions to the island's settlers more likely reflects concerns over government expenditures than fears of economic competition. The West Country merchants were certainly a formidable power bloc in imperial and Parliamentary circles but imperial authorities likely did not fear the prospect of a more independent, self-sufficient, and developed Newfoundland – as long as they did not have to pay for it and as long as the lucrative fishery kept operating. Like elsewhere in the colonial world, government was, as Bannister puts it, "essentially reactive" and "limited by available resources." Naturally, the minimal presence of formal institutions caused various difficulties for settlers as would be the case anywhere. Britain did not grant Newfoundland official colonial status until the early nineteenth century and their long-standing reticence to do so disappointed the few settler elites who submitted their first formal request for such recognition as early as the 1670s. These planters and merchants were invested in seeing Newfoundland become a true colony with its own legislature, institutions, and a measure of self-determination, like New England or Virginia, in which they might exercise some influence.[156] However, the lack of formal political, legal, and ecclesiastical infrastructure in Newfoundland for much of the colonial period also made possible the enjoyment of a kind of personal liberty which might seem to be the very stuff

[155] Matthews, "Historical Fence Building," 145-6; Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 32; Cell, *Newfoundland Discovered*, 57-9; Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 44, 62-3.

[156] Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 6, 186; Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 206.

of dreams to some American historians, particularly those who have romanticized the concept of life on the frontier. This should not suggest that community security, order, or sufficiently effective governance suffered in any fashion more grievous than most regions in the Atlantic basin. In fact, the relatively informal, frequently evolving, and sometimes *ad hoc* nature of governance and regulation in Newfoundland communities strongly resembled legal and governmental conditions elsewhere in the colonial British world.

Finally, any discussion of colonial liberty must acknowledge the presence, pervasiveness, and impact of Atlantic slavery which propelled all activities within the interconnected Atlantic economy, even in places like Newfoundland which always had only the most minimal black population.

Folklore, like language, is both an expression of culture and a vehicle for it. The best known of a region's folktales can teach us a great deal about the people who grow up listening to them and about the communities they come from. The Jack tales are some of Newfoundland's best-known folklore and continued to be told among outport families and communities into the 1950s. The hero of these tales, "Jack," is commonly depicted as a wily peasant, although sometimes he is secretly a king's son. In these stories, Jack faces challenges or arduous tasks from archetypal authority figures like ogres, giants, kings, and magicians against whom he must prevail. Martin Lovelace observed that such stories are common in more than one early modern plebeian community including those of the rural West Country from which most Newfoundland fishing servants were recruited until the eighteenth century, when the island began to draw far more servants from southern Ireland. The overwhelming majority of Newfoundland fishing servants came from farming communities and many were used to seasonal migration for work in

agriculture and husbandry. This goes far toward explaining why the authority figure in many of these stories is a land-owning farmer rather than a fishing master or naval captain. According to Lovelace, the Jack tales functioned as advice and wisdom for young working-class men in "how to be." The most complicated and problematic relationship in a working-class Newfoundlander's life was typically between themselves and their employer and their daily lives were heavily affected by the continuous pursuit of steady work. The Jack tales provided models for young, working-class boys and men to emulate in order to help them navigate the complex and highly unequal relationships between themselves and employers.

These tales emphasized being useful and hardworking, the importance of guarding knowledge, or taking care not to reveal too much information to authority figures, and the importance of never flinching, that is, admitting that something is too painful or too difficult to do. These folktales offered warnings against the duplicity of those with power and authority. In a society in which hard times might cause an employer to balk at paying wages or in which an unscrupulous merchant might take advantage of a working man's shortcomings in literacy and numeracy to inflate his debts, the Jack tales advised young men to be on guard against deviousness in powerful people and warned that they themselves might have to use duplicity to defend their own interests. Jack's archetypal love interest in these stories is usually, and predictably, a princess. However, she is also sometimes the authority figure's daughter. Her typical role is to fall in love with Jack and partner with him to defeat his adversary. With virtually all characters in these tales, with the exception of wise old men or his female partner, Jack is on guard. Such a hero encourages young men to trust only their

sweethearts, wives, and closest male mentors and reflects the community and gender dynamics of colonial Newfoundland's working class. These tales also usually end with the defeat, death, or simply the humiliation - the more absurd, the better - of the authority figure over whom Jack always triumphs. The working class was typically least free in the realms of employment and subsistence, a fact clearly communicated in the structure of the Jack tales. Perhaps this is why other forms of personal liberty might have been perceived as important to workers in colonial Newfoundland.[157]

Indeed, political, social, and ecclesiastical control was significantly limited in Newfoundland for most of the colonial period which helped shape the island's culture of rather *laissez-faire* social values, family and community independence, and self-sufficiency. Later, when efforts to escalate social or religious control were undertaken during the late eighteenth century, these forces were slow to penetrate in the outports beyond St. John's where communities tended to be more heavily working-class and egalitarian. Basic governance of early settlements was achieved principally by the Newfoundland legal system which, though highly rudimentary to begin with, evolved over time, like most early colonial institutions, to be sufficiently comprehensive for the community it served.[158]

Historians of Newfoundland traditionally argued that the island's lack of legal infrastructure hampered access to justice until very late in the seventeenth century and allowed for the greater possibility of judicial abuse. There is almost certainly some truth to these assertions as is probably the case in most frontier societies. During the sixteenth,

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[157] Martin Lovelace, "Jack and His Masters: Real Worlds and Tale Worlds in Newfoundland Folktales," *Journal of Folklore Research* 38, no. ½ (Jan-Aug 2001): 149-59.

[158] Keough, *The Slender Thread*, 425, 429, 460-61; Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 22.

seventeenth, and early eighteenth centuries, it was the convention for the captain of the first ship to arrive in any Newfoundland harbor to serve as the region's *de facto* governor and justice for the duration of the fishing season. By the mid-eighteenth century, the Royal Navy had supplanted the fishing admirals as the apex of legal and governmental authority in Newfoundland and proved to be instrumental in the evolution and eventual codification of legal custom on the island. Traditional Newfoundland historiography, in keeping with the general tenor of the conflict thesis, regularly emphasizes the corruption of the fishing admirals. Similarly, the later naval admirals are routinely portrayed as tyrannical and their tendency toward harsh and ruthless quarter-deck justice, particularly in relation to fishing servants, is heavily emphasized. The reality however, is somewhat more nuanced.[159]

Of course, the fact that the fishing admirals were in a position to stake out the best fishing premises and temporarily held the power to deprive others of their fishing rooms with impunity made the whole system obviously fraught with potential conflicts of interest. Yet, according to historian Jerry Bannister, the harshness and corruption of pre-eighteenth century Newfoundland justice has been exaggerated. It became clear to British authorities by the late 1690s that the most pressing problem with the fishing admirals was not that they administered justice despotically or with excessive cruelty as the traditional historiography implies but that many were apt to neglect their judicial duties. Fishing admirals were simply fishing masters who came, like most other merchant men of modest-to-middling capital, to make a living in the Newfoundland fishery. As such, they were likely to give their own financial priorities precedence over

[159] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 7, 257; Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, xv, 4-6, 280.

their judicial duties as admiral, especially since the most demanding period for court business, early autumn, when sentences were rendered and carried out, tended to coincide with the most crucial part of the fishing season, when the sale and shipping of one's catch and the settling of accounts took place. These temporary legal authorities were also slow to levy fines or punishments for non-felony crimes although some were undoubtedly not above taking bribes from those who desired a particular outcome from their interaction with the law. What made these arrangements more complex was the lack of any legal code for the island beyond the various incarnations of the Western Charter and King William's Act of 1699, the latter of which only really empowered fishing admirals to arbitrate disputes over access to fishing premises within the harbor of their jurisdiction. The Act did not actually prescribe any punishments for non-felony crimes not requiring prosecution in England. The fact that the seventeenth-century admirals were reportedly slow to adjudicate matters of petty crime or those relating to the laws of master and servant shows rather an unwillingness to act boldly in cases of uncertain jurisdiction rather than a tendency toward despotism or corruption. That being said, historians seeking to further illuminate the typical functions and conduct of seventeenth-century fishing admirals are at a decided disadvantage as painfully few records remain from fishing admiral's courts during this period. In many cases, such records were quite possibly never kept.[160]

The limits to the jurisdiction of civilian fishing admirals and the lack of action on the matter within the imperial center inspired *ad hoc* local arrangements in multiple regions along the English Shore which sought to better provide the rudiments of justice

[160] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 68; Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 26-8, 30-34.

and order to Newfoundland settler communities. Typically, informal assemblies representing propertied planter and merchant interests would appoint a magistrate from among their own class to administer justice during the off-season when the fishing admirals returned to Europe. Any serious malefactors to regional peace and order could now be tried locally with the help of fellow settlers as witnesses or as *ad hoc* deputies and gaolers. Those convicted would be imprisoned until the following summer when the admirals arrived again and sentences could be carried out or pardons rendered. As civil magistracy became increasingly common in settler communities in the mid-to-late seventeenth century, it became more common for the admirals to support the local civil magistrates as surrogate court justices during the fishing season. The earliest recorded example of this judicial surrogacy occurred in 1680, when Captain Robert Robinson of the HMS *Assistance* co-presided with a local magistrate over a case in which four men were prosecuted under King William's Act for their destruction of French fishing premises and equipment. The decision of the court saw the four defendants dunked from the yardarm of the *Assistance*. Although this case is the earliest recorded episode for the custom of judicial surrogacy on the island, it was quite possibly not the first. Further, the naval admirals later co-opted this practice when they began to assume greater control of the island.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, naval government was firmly established and worked in tandem with the civil magistracy within a system which incorporated district courts, surrogate courts, and the governor's court which either conferred pardons or saw sentences carried out. Later nineteenth-century reformers often described naval justice as rudimentary, despotic, cruel, and far more vulnerable to corruption than an

elected assembly might be. Yet again, there is a strong element of truth to the historiography which casts the administrative structure of the Royal Navy as oppressive, particularly towards Irish-Catholic fishing servants. But similar to the long-standing perspective on the seventeenth-century fishing admirals, the reality of the administration of naval governance was much more nuanced.[161]

Naval government in eighteenth-century and early nineteenth-century Newfoundland was actually much safer from corruption than many colonial legislatures because of the nature and tenure of naval governorships. Typically, the commodore who led the Newfoundland squadron to the island every summer was appointed from among the English upper classes within the naval ranks. Their appointments were limited to three years, they were not permitted to hold any financial interests in the island fishery, and they were fully accountable to the imperial center. This should not suggest that the position was not lucrative or coveted. The governor of Newfoundland had direct access to the imperial center including officials at Whitehall and even the royal family. They were given the title of Excellency. In addition to their salary as governor, they might also make additional income on any freight traveling annually with their convoy to southern European markets or home to England. These conditions, combined with the relatively short term of service and limited annual presence during the fishing season, significantly reduced the possibility of corruption for personal gain. Further, there were no elections, press organizations, and no educated bourgeois culture of any significant size to mount lobbying campaigns until the nineteenth century and therefore naval governors and their appointed junior officers were rarely influenced or troubled by political considerations in

[161] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 309, 430; Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 10-11, 23, 26-9, 34, 104-105, 188.

their decision-making. Luckily, unlike their seventeenth-century counterparts, the civilian fishing admirals, the naval admirals and junior officers of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries kept careful and quite complete records of legal proceedings and decisions. Far from being corrupt or despotic, the evidence overwhelmingly indicates that naval justices were guided by the rule of law.[162]

The Newfoundland legal regime relied on a combination of writ, statute, common law, and local custom. These latter two most heavily influenced the process of state-building which the Royal Navy, perhaps unwittingly, undertook during the eighteenth century. The decisions of both civilian magistrates and naval justices reflect a preference for English common law and for established local custom which was routinely treated as having an importance equal to, and sometimes greater than, that of existing British statutes. Such legal practices were common across the colonial Atlantic – rather than the wholesale imposition of English law, local customs tended to be supported and buttressed by various representatives of imperial authority. Bannister notes that such practices likely served to help keep colonies comfortably within the imperial fold which goes a long way toward explaining the rebellious response of New England's people to the various "Intolerable Acts" of taxation during the late eighteenth century, which they viewed as imperial overreach. By the end of the eighteenth century, under the authority and support of the naval administration, a legal system which had developed over two centuries to meet the needs of both the fishery and Newfoundland's settled communities, and had long operated on a customary basis, was finally codified in the Judicature Acts of 1791 and 1792. The nature of Newfoundland's economy and settled communities meant

[162] Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 90-91, 98, 104, 106-108, 286-7.

that law and governance on the island was principally concerned with the regulation of the fishery, the protection of property, the law of master and servant, and criminal law. The administration of these was virtually the only tool actively employed by British authorities in colonial Newfoundland for the purposes of producing order, security, and governance. As a consequence that was perhaps unintended, the administration of law also functioned as an effective tool of state-building.[163]

Historians like Jerry Bannister have successfully challenged the notion of the island's colonial justice as corrupt and despotic. However, this should not suggest that Newfoundland justice could not also be harsh, particularly toward male members of the laboring class which made up the majority of the population. Naval records of proceedings and punishments demonstrate that the legal regime in colonial Newfoundland did discriminate against male Irish-Catholic servants more than others by targeting them with harsh punishments intended to inspire fear and maintain social order. Yet, it is important to consider the specific periods and context in which these practices appeared in sharpest relief. The mid-to-late eighteenth century saw the rise of anti-Irish and anti-Catholic sentiment concentrated particularly among the St. John's elite who were largely English Protestants. The steady growth and eventual predominance of a working-class Irish-Catholic population during previous decades made these wealthy, propertied, and mercantile interests fear that another French invasion might prove successful should the Irish decide to join forces with their Catholic brothers. Many Irish immigrants were automatically assumed to have radical Jacobite leanings. The outbreak of the French Revolution and the subsequent United Irish rising exacerbated the fears of

[163] Ibid., 14-16, 22-3, 281, 287.

sedition and rebellion among planter, mercantile, judicial, and settler elites in Newfoundland. These conditions had a significant impact on the administration of law and justice during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The vast majority of those who were both sentenced to and subjected to corporal or capital punishment were male Irish-Catholic fishing servants. This baldly prejudiced system was used to intimidate and terrorize the laboring class as a deterrent to crime or rebellion and to reinforce the social order of masters' authority over servants in the broader community.[164]

While this aspect of the Newfoundland legal system hardly aligns with any notion of personal liberty for working-class people, a broader examination of naval justice reveals the limitations to its reputed cruelty. Naval justice was far from summary. The circumstances of the offence, the character of both the accused and their accusers, and the strength of testimony or evidence were all usually taken into consideration and had bearing upon judgment and sentencing. During sentencing proceedings, justices were far more likely to employ mercy than corporal or capital punishment. Approximately seventy percent of those sentenced to death under the island's naval justice system were granted mercy in the governor's court. Some were pardoned outright and some were given a secondary punishment such as transportation from the island or whipping. Contrary to their fearsome reputation, naval justices tended to demonstrate more leniency overall than colonial civilian courts. The majority of those who were hanged on the governor's orders were condemned for willful murder. The remaining minority were executed, or reprieved until their case could be heard by a court in England, for crimes of

[164] Ibid., 10-11, 24, 188-9, 193-4, 198, 216-18, 220-21, 282, 288; Keough, *The Slender Thread*, location 50-55.

rape, forgery, and larceny. For the commission of these latter three crimes, most other offenders also received either pardons or secondary punishments.

In cases of non-felony offenses such as minor assault or petty theft, both naval justices and local magistrates showed a preference for fines, peace bonds, and public apologies over whippings or imprisonment in the stocks. Corporal punishments were generally reserved for more serious charges such as domestic violence or sexual assault but could also be used to intimidate rebellious or insubordinate servants. Further, it is important to note also that such corporal punishments were invariably employed only on male servants. Women were consistently reprieved from harsh punishments, even when convicted of capital crimes, and in the worst and most rare cases might face transportation from the island. Throughout the entire colonial period in Newfoundland, only one execution of a female was ever documented. Male masters and property-owners likewise never paid as high a price for their crimes as did male servants. First, they were invariably wealthy and decently educated enough to mount a sufficient legal defense. Even those who came before the court for ill-treating their servants or contravening their duties toward them were never whipped or placed in the stocks. The fact remained that if a Newfoundlander were wealthy, Protestant, female, or English, they had a better chance of being pardoned, being given a lighter sentence, or not facing conviction in the first place.

Bannister emphasizes that the use of mercy was as calculated as the use of harsh punishment and that clemency was used to illustrate and legitimize the power of the naval government, reminding offenders and potential criminals that only the governor's mercy stood between themselves and the whip, or worse, the gallows. In this manner, naval

government employed both terror and mercy strategically to protect property and maintain social order in Newfoundland.[165] However, this should not imply that the law did not also work in the favor of wronged workers.

Employers who failed to honor contractual obligations to their servants or treated them with excessive harshness were held to account as well. Naval justices who found employers to be culpable of failing to adequately provide for or pay their workers not only forced them to pay servants their promised salaries, but the court costs as well. In one dispute between fishing master John Andrews and his servant Thomas Taylor, the judge found that both were culpable: the servant for being insubordinate and the master for using excessive physical force in punishment. Andrews claimed that Taylor had cursed at him and struck him in the midst of an argument about the best way to secure the ship's anchor. Taylor's shipmates confirmed that he had been verbally insubordinate to Andrews, which was punishable by whipping, but none recalled him striking his master. At least one witness recalled rather that Andrews had stopped beating Taylor long enough to take off his jacket before resuming the beating and some testified that a good deal of blood had been spilt on deck. This kind of excessive punishment was strictly prohibited according to the custom of the Royal Navy. A ship's master was not permitted to summarily whip a servant and neither was he allowed to cause severe bleeding while correcting servants. Thus, both parties were fined and Andrews was ordered to pay the court costs. The servant was discharged from his job but he was not whipped, which Bannister asserts he almost certainly would have been had there been sufficient evidence of Taylor striking his master or had his master not used excessive force upon him. This

[165] Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 188-90, 197-99, 200-203, 206-209, 215, 223-24; Keough, *The Slender Thread*, 332-38.

case illustrates a system with a comprehensive decision-making process rather than an institution of summary justice which concerns itself only with the prerogatives of the privileged. In this case, the judge was able to uphold the rule of law which prescribed behavioral limitations for both masters and servants, to exercise discretion given the specific details of a case, and to show mercy where it seemed warranted. The ready and more consistent employment of mercy in many cases seems to have been warranted indeed for, in reality, the overwhelming majority of Newfoundlanders, both migrants and settlers, were law-abiding and most interested in simply living their lives and profiting from the island's lucrative fishery.[166] As well as limitations to the reputed cruelty of Newfoundland's system of naval justice, there also were limitations to its reach.

While the Royal Navy significantly expanded and legitimized the institutionalization of law, justice, and governance in Newfoundland, its influence was slow to penetrate in the outports beyond St. John's until well into the nineteenth century. This is mostly because the annual presence of the Newfoundland squadron was concentrated almost exclusively in the island's capital. For most of the latter eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century, the outports received, at most, a short annual visit from one of the junior officers appointed by the naval governor to sit as surrogate court justices in local cases. This annual visit from a naval representative for a mere few days in late summer or early autumn was about as much direct imperial regulation which the people in these rural communities experienced for decades. The reality for most of the island was that there was very little government interference in daily life for most of the colonial period, especially in the outports. Even in St. John's, the Royal Navy was

[166] Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 230, 251-53, 255; Keough, *The Slender Thread*, 314-18.

only present for roughly ten weeks every year. They did not begin to maintain a year-round presence in the capital until the end of the eighteenth century. In most settler communities, civil magistrates were regularly petitioned to protect property, enforce contracts, and settle local disputes, but little more regulation of any formal sort took place.[167]

The virtual absence of naval officers or customs officials in the outports prior to 1767 resulted in the opportunity for nearly unfettered year-round trade. Ralph Lounsbury documented the extensive trade in illegal intercolonial goods within Newfoundland, chiefly via New England traders. These enterprising merchants were able to surreptitiously sail small barques and sloops into the island's outports for most of the year except in extreme cases of sea ice blocking harbors during winter. The increasing vigilance and efficacy of customs officers in the major New England ports by the late seventeenth century meant that St. John's remained thereafter the most popular north Atlantic destination for extra-legal traders during the off-season, where even the commander of the army garrison was not above purchasing some illicit Virginia tobacco for himself and his troops. Lounsbury described Newfoundlanders' strategy for perpetuating such an advantage as a "conspiracy of silence" which was maintained at St. John's all throughout the fishing season when the Newfoundland squadron was in residence. Further, frequent visits by New England fishermen and traders to the island made regular intercolonial migration accessible, though it was technically illegal for migratory servants to emigrate to another colony via Newfoundland.[168]

[167] Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 110-113, 180.
[168] Lounsbury, 608-611, 613, 618.

Imperial interests were invested in the island primarily for the economic benefit generated by the fishery and for its benefits as a "nursery" for seamen. If too many fishing servants took their wages and migrated to another colony, this would cause the continuous supply of fresh recruits for the Royal Navy to dry up. Still, the lack of official presence to enforce the prohibition against servants' migration meant that, like many other laws created to regulate settlement in Newfoundland, the prohibition against emigration had little effect. In fact, with so many traders coming and going in outport harbors throughout the year, it was often easy for servants to pay for covert passage to New England or points beyond. Many traders were amenable to such arrangements as were many Newfoundland planters and migratory fishing masters. The trader was able to make extra money by taking on a few illegal passengers, and the emigrants' former employers saved money by not having to pay for their servants' return passage to Europe. Some accounts document clandestine migrants from Newfoundland hiding in barrels and casks to avoid customs agents at their destination ports. Even approximate figures cannot be proposed since most evidence is anecdotal but Lounsbury estimated that New England alone received at least two hundred migrants from Newfoundland per year through the colonial period. However, there were quite likely many more with estimates ranging as high as two thousand migrants in individual years.[169]

These conditions not only allowed for fairly accessible intercolonial migration, but they also made evading the Royal Navy during periods of mustering or impressment much easier. All colonial settler communities were coastal and few magistrates or naval officers were willing to make the trek into the island's thickly forested interior for more

[169] Ibid., 618, 620, 623; Keough, *The Slender Thread*, 91; Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 237-41.

than a mile or two to pursue fugitives. Vast and for the most part unmapped until the late nineteenth century, Newfoundland's interior was more than enough wilderness in which to hide with sufficient resources for shelter, forage, and fresh water for temporary survival. Draft-dodgers and "dieters"[170] were pursued more pointedly by naval authorities during the mid-to-late eighteenth century but imperial authorities just did not have the resources to police the entire island. Eighteenth-century naval governors made serious attempts to root out any masterless men, making it illegal for any servant to remain on the island who had completed their contract but failed to sign a new one. Governor Hugh Palliser first instated the law in the 1770s and several subsequent governors reinforced it. However, enforcement of the prohibition against dieters had a limited impact in the outports and an unattached servant with his wages still in his pocket and seeking hospitality or future employment would have been welcomed in most communities without a consistent naval presence.[171]

Lounsbury theorized that the trend of out-migration following a season or two of work in Newfoundland was a testament to the lack of development and poor quality of life in the island's settlements.[172] However, this exceptionalist attitude fails to take into consideration a multitude of factors. Many Newfoundland fishing servants did not come from fishing families but migrated to the island for the promise of a better wage than was possible elsewhere in the Atlantic. It is likely that many did not aim to become career fishermen. Many of the fishing servants recruited to Newfoundland came from communities in West Country England or southern Ireland where the primary modes of

[170] Unemployed fishing servants.

[171] Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 161-62, 238; Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 63, 241; Keough, *The Slender Thread*, 57-8, 106-107, 140-41, 93.

[172] Lounsbury, 618-20.

subsistence and profit came from agriculture and husbandry. New England offered the potential to acquire freehold property which no Newfoundlander owned, even though they might be able to hold rights of possession to coastal lands and fishing rooms which they could pass on to their heirs. Beyond this, New England could offer ownership of far more acreage, much larger herds, and access to a longer growing season than Newfoundland could. Additionally, gender ratios were far more balanced in New England for most of the colonial period.[173] Young male fishing servants who were keen to marry, settle down, and pursue a life in the New World that was more familiar to them than the fishing communities of Newfoundland might have considered their prospects to be better and more attractive in New England. Those who came to Newfoundland and stayed, married, had children, and settled developed an interesting and unique culture of self-sufficiency and independence which functioned at the community, family, and individual levels. This culture owes much to the adaptation of Newfoundlanders to the relative lack of institutional presence and infrastructure during the colonial period.

Within the context of the Atlantic basin, Newfoundland was by no means remarkable for employing relatively informal institutions when needed or for living under varying degrees of naval governance. Most colonial institutions were markedly less formal and more rudimentary than in the mother country and many jurisdictions relied on fines and public displays of corporal punishment to maintain social order in a society where the majority of the population was represented by a laboring underclass. Naval government as a complementary and legitimizing force to colonial law was the convention in Belize as well as in Newfoundland. Moreover, British naval commodores

[173] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 205, 212-215, 222; Taylor, 169-71.

and officers represented the tangible power of the English crown far more effectively than any colonial governor. When in port in any British Atlantic colony, the Royal Navy regularly took on supporting or supplemental governing and regulatory roles. They could also be called upon to provide support during periods of instability as evidenced in the case of Massachusetts on the eve of the American Revolution.[174]

The minimal presence of institutions in Newfoundland contributed markedly to the development of local culture in multiple ways. For one, it meant that there were a negligible number of elites, institutional or otherwise, in most communities and the vast majority of the population was working-class. The middle class in colonial Newfoundland essentially consisted of the few mercantile, judicial, and planter elites who were permanent residents of the island and who were invariably overwhelmingly outnumbered by fishing servants. Most members of Newfoundland communities lived and worked closely together and were interdependent on one another within the local economy. This meant far less class differentiation in settled communities than was typically the case in mainland colonies and therefore far more egalitarian communities in general.[175]

The unique social, sexual, and legal freedoms discussed in chapter five partly stemmed from the notable lack of ecclesiastical forces of social control during the colonial period. This does not mean that religion was not an intrinsic part of cultural life in Newfoundland but the institutional trappings of Christianity such as churches, clergy, parochial schools, monastic orders, or missions were notably absent until the early to

[174] Taylor, 142-43; Deetz and Deetz, 113, 122-23; Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 15-17, 32, 281-82, 286.

[175] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 207-208.

mid-nineteenth century. However, these institutions tended to be fairly minimal across the colonial Atlantic world for most of the study period and similar to the situation in Newfoundland, this institutional dearth created difficulties for settlers. There never seemed to be enough clergy to serve colonial populations in any region of the Atlantic and it was quite common for settlers to have trouble securing the means to have marriages performed, children baptized, and religious instruction offered by the Church proper, rather than by magistrates, judges, naval officers, or other laypeople of community standing.[176] Yet, by not having religious institutions or authorities around to exercise a heavy influence over daily life, Newfoundlanders gained certain advantages of personal liberty.

Newfoundland men and women, particularly of the southern Avalon, enjoyed social and sexual freedoms not commonly countenanced by contemporary Christian authorities including common-law cohabitation, court-approved separation from spouses, and child-maintenance agreements which did not hinge on the moral virtue of the mother. It is definitely worth noting that as the Catholic Church began to exert a more palpable institutional presence on the Avalon Peninsula during the mid-nineteenth century, these social, sexual, and legal practices became far less prevalent and more open to persecution. However, for most of the colonial period, there was little formal religious presence in the island, making it possible for people to go about their daily lives without the regulatory force of the church to govern their behavior.

[176] Thomas Cruse, "Deposition [taken at Totnes, before commissioners appointed by the Privy Council]," retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/thomas-cruse-deposition-1667.php; Keough, The Slender Thread, 456-57; Pestana, 57.

These conditions horrified contemporary New England commentators particularly with regard to the unregulated drinking habits of Newfoundlanders. One New England ship captain asserted his shock and horror that one might find no less than two hundred men "drunk of a sabbath day" in virtually any Newfoundland harbor. Such sentiments are unsurprising coming from a New Englander. In colonies like Massachusetts Bay, Connecticut, and New Haven, the church was the pivot of every community, working in lock-step with local magistrates and town councils to maintain social order. In New England, the Church reached into every resident's life with notable regulatory powers, in some cases with all the force of a theocracy. Newfoundland communities, in contrast, employed sufficient regulation to maintain peace and social order but attempts by local authorities to intrude on settler's private lives were relatively rare. The late eighteenth-century naval governors tried to enforce a prohibition against drinking on the sabbath but to little effect in the outports. Fishing servants labored six days per week during the fishing season, for fourteen to twenty hours per day. The notion that they might be expected not to get drunk on Sunday, their only day off, would have been viewed as a judgmental and unwarranted intrusion into the private life of a worker. Such an expectation might very well be incomprehensible to their employer as well, since they likely owned the tippling house at which their employees drank. Most planters and fishing masters understood that men who worked as hard as fishing servants did needed outlets and Newfoundland workers certainly enjoyed their privileged access to the top-shelf French brandy and Iberian wine, the New England rum, and the Chesapeake tobacco that was made available to them by both the legal and illegal Newfoundland trade. As is the case in many working-class cultures, friendship and camaraderie was

fostered among fishing crews with the aid of a glass or two or a shared tobacco pipe, facilitating greater cooperation and perhaps also a more successful and profitable season. This should not suggest that many Newfoundlanders, including fishing servants, did not attend religious services on Sundays but they almost certainly would have been relatively informal and few working-class attendees would have made any great effort to remain sober for the occasion.[177]

While the island lacked a formal religious presence, there was nonetheless some sectarian strife and persecution as was typical in Atlantic colonies with competing Christian denominations. Catholic Newfoundlanders were treated more harshly by the justice system. However, the oppressive laws imposed against Catholic Newfoundlanders during the second half of the eighteenth century were far more excessive than the Penal Laws enacted in England, which only barred Catholics from public office. In Newfoundland, not only could Catholics not hold office but neither could they own a public house or be licensed to sell liquor. No two Catholic men could live in the same house without a Protestant master and they could be convicted of vagrancy and deported for remaining on the island without an employment contract. For deserting their employer before the termination of their current contract, they might be flogged or even receive a whipping exceeding twelve lashes with the cat o' nine tails, a punishment also frequently imposed on male, Irish servants for larceny, common assault, or rioting/breach of peace. For roughly half a century, settlers were threatened with house-burnings, transportation, or at the very least, heavy fines simply for sheltering an uncontracted Catholic servant for the winter. The anti-Catholic attitudes exhibited by

[177] Keough, *The Slender Thread*, 455-61; Lounsbury, 611-12; Taylor, 161, 173-74, 178-85; Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 292-94, 346-50.

English Protestant elites and naval justices during the late eighteenth century certainly had their impact and it is worth noting that the nineteenth-century reform movement for responsible government was heavily spearheaded by a St. John's coalition of middle-class Catholics. However, multiple historians have brought the supposedly broad pervasiveness of sectarianism and religious discord in colonial Newfoundland into serious question.

Religious strife seems not to have been nearly as prevalent in Newfoundland prior to 1750 despite the traditional historiographic focus on tensions between Catholics and Protestants. In many cases, perhaps religious differences might have simply offered an excuse to attack those who could potentially threaten prevailing economic or political interests. Records show that the incidence of more brutal punishments against male servants such as excessive whippings only spiked notably between 1765 and 1770 and from 1786 to 1790. During these intervals, imperial authorities grew more zealous about social control over Irish Catholics whom they feared might join their fellow French Catholics in their struggle against British colonies, or whom they feared might share some of their Irish brothers more militant tendencies such as those of the United Irish, Jacobins, or Whiteboys. Moreover, the 1760s and 1770s saw the employment of servants in the colonial Newfoundland fishery reach an all-time high, coinciding with the advent of historically low cod prices. Anything approaching a harmony of social classes at such a time would have been utterly remarkable, even if the disparate social classes did not have opposing religious and political views. These harsh conditions for Catholic Newfoundlanders changed markedly by the early nineteenth century with the repeal of the Penal Laws, the advent of the reform movement, and the completion of the shift to the

family production model which required far less hired labor and ensured that laborers were far more dispersed across households and settlements. Religious tensions seemed to lessen along with political, social, and economic ones.[178]

Anti-Irish and anti-Catholic sentiments could not have been as pronounced among resident planters and civil magistrates in the outports as they seemed to be among the naval, planter, and mercantile elites at St. John's. Whether they were English or Irish, outport planters consistently showed a willingness and an eagerness to hire the increasing numbers of Irish servants emigrating to the island during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Moreover, outport Newfoundland communities seemed less divided by religious strictures and differences than was the case among the elites in St. John's. One Catholic missionary expressed his shock at the informality and lack of orthodoxy within religious life in rural Newfoundland, observing that both the "English and Irish marry and baptize themselves." Visiting clerics, no matter their denomination, were invariably welcomed in outport communities. Peter Pope noted that multiple Puritan and Quaker clerics visiting from New England were invariably welcomed all along the seventeenth-century English Shore and their services regularly attended by congregations of Anglican, Catholic, and Puritan settlers alike. During the early seventeenth century, the Oath of Supremacy was not required in Sir George Calvert's colony at Ferryland and throughout the seventeenth century, there was spotty enforcement of the oath even in those regions of the island where it was supposedly required. Calvert himself was a committed Catholic and regularly celebrated mass with fellow Catholic settlers. However, he also provided space within his household at the Pool Plantation for Protestant settlers to hold

[178] Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 237-45; Miller, "Avalon and Maryland," 104-10; Sweeny, 296.

services also. The case of Erasmus Stourton, the Anglican cleric whose outrage at the open practice of Catholicism in the colony proved only somewhat troublesome to the peace of Calvert's Ferryland, demonstrates that sectarian conflict was a real phenomenon in colonial Newfoundland but not one significant enough to excessively unsettle communities – not until well into the nineteenth century.[179] The Ferryland Riots during the winter of 1787-1788, which coincided with the rising fears of Irish sedition and rebellion among Newfoundland elites during the late eighteenth century and which resulted in the arrest of approximately one hundred and fifty men, nearly all the men in Ferryland, increased the legal crackdown on Irish-Catholic servants and represents a notable exception and rare example of high sectarian turmoil in Newfoundland during the colonial period.

The "affray" which began as a jurisdictional squabble between Bishop James O'Donel, supported by Irish immigrants from Munster, and a renegade "strolling" priest supported by Irish immigrants from Leinster. However, this event also had clear tribal overtones, perhaps more than religious or social ones, since the bulk of participants on both sides were Irish Catholic and working-class. Some of the rioters arrested received hideous punishments including nearly one hundred lashes in at least two cases. Yet throughout the history of colonial justice in Newfoundland, such excessively violent responses are extremely rare. They typically coincide with periods of pronounced

[179] Featherstone, 393; Miller, "Avalon and Maryland," 105-110; Erasmus Stourton, "Examination before the Justices of the Peace at Plymouth," Great Britain, PRO, Colonial Office, CO 1/4 (59), 144, MHA 16-B-2-016, in Gillian T. Cell, ed., *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630*, 284-85 (London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982), revised by Peter E. Pope, retrieved on 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/erasmus-stourton-examination-1628.php; Peter Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 293-4.

geopolitical and sectarian unease, not to mention increased Irish immigration, which made Newfoundland authorities distrust Irish Catholics and strategically target them with harsh punishments designed to intimidate and calculated mercies designed to maintain social order.[180]

Any Atlanticist colonial history must also address slavery, perhaps most particularly when discussing colonial experiences of liberty because for virtually all European immigrants to North America, realization of their concept of liberty became conditional not only on the dispossession of indigenous peoples of their land but also on the enslavement of Africans and their descendants. The interconnected economy of the colonial Atlantic basin inarguably supported the mass propagation of slave labor throughout the Caribbean, the Chesapeake region, the Carolinas, and to a lesser extent, in New England and other northerly colonies. African slavery was both pervasive and a driving force behind all European economic and colonial expansion by the late seventeenth century. Even if people of African descent were more rarely seen in northerly regions, there is firm evidence to suggest that the settlers in those colonies understood this state of affairs just as well as Europeans in the Chesapeake, Carolinas, or the Caribbean.[181]

New England was quite closely tied to the Caribbean through both trade and missionary activities. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, New England traders regularly supplied dried fish, timber products, and livestock to Barbados in exchange for sugar and molasses. New England also produced a great deal more clergy

[180] Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 201, 234-5; Keough, *The Slender Thread*, location 271.

[181] Pestana, 12.

than the rest of the colonial world and many clerics educated in New England served or preached in colonial Caribbean communities. It is worth noting that in some Caribbean communities, such as Barbados for example, slaves were forbidden to receive Christian ministration, forcing clergy appointed to the island to collaborate with powerful slave-owners and further facilitate their brutal regime. African slavery was as uncommon in the settlements of New France as it was in New England. However, the interconnected colonial economy ensured that even French Canada regularly profited from and helped perpetuate Atlantic slavery. New France traded grain products, including hard biscuits, to feed the slaves of St. Domingue, in exchange for Caribbean sugar and sugar products produced with slave labor.[182] References to people of African descent residing in colonial Newfoundland are extremely rare, but a few extant documentary sources do confirm their limited presence during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The entire North American colonial apparatus depended upon and perpetuated slavery, even within those regions which saw the fewest African arrivals. This is particularly true about Newfoundland since the region was a pivotal hub for Atlantic trade and because the north Atlantic cod fishery produced an abundant protein source, the "unmerchantable" products of which fed millions of slaves in the Caribbean and the Chesapeake. The Ferryland database of names on the Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage website records that Augustus Bullard, master of the *Ruth* of Barbados, visited Ferryland during the 1701 season both to catch fish and to buy fish locally. While he may have been about to undertake a triangular voyage to southern Europe, it was also

[182] Taylor, 175-6, 205, 214; Dunn, 336-7; Sweeny, 290.

entirely possible that he was purchasing “unmerchantable” bulk fish to feed enslaved Barbadians as well.

Historian Peter Pope observed that visiting slave ships did occasionally sell slaves to Newfoundland planters. The Ferryland database notes that upon his death in 1791, John Benger of Ferryland freed his two slaves Sancho and Serah, as well as Serah’s three children, Jack, Nancy, and Trephon, providing for them in his will. Despite the rarity of such surviving records and examples, it is clear that at least some Newfoundland planters were as willing as their colonial counterparts elsewhere in the Atlantic to enslave Africans. This writer has found reference to only one anecdote which specifically describes a brief period during which enslaved Africans worked as fishing servants, but only on the Grand Banks rather than in the inshore fishery. It is possible that, in large part, enslaved African labor in colonial Newfoundland might have been mostly domestic in nature and likely limited to more elite residents. The Bengers were one of the wealthiest families in the region and were likely one of the very few who could afford to own slaves. Moreover, Sancho, Serah, and her three children are the only enslaved people documented at Ferryland between the early seventeenth and mid-nineteenth centuries. This should not automatically imply that the business of Atlantic slavery in Newfoundland ended with rare and scattered slave ownership. At least nineteen slave ships were built in Newfoundland harbors during the second half of the eighteenth century, all of which undoubtedly carried hundreds, perhaps thousands of people into bondage during this most extreme peak of Atlantic slavery.

Documentary sources suggest that there might have been some people of African descent who were paid laborers in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Newfoundland. In

1689, the St. John's planter Thomas Oxford made a formal report of the theft of his "covenanted negro servant," a rather puzzling description which begs the question whether the servant was indentured or enslaved. "Covenanted" is rather vague, and might be interpreted as either. The use of the term "theft" might suggest human property but also might indicate that Oxford suspected not that his servant had run away, but that they had been kidnapped and sold into slavery, as was the hideous and unfortunate fate of many free people of color in the colonial Atlantic. As part of a campaign to address and punish violence against women in the colony in the late 1770s, Governor John Montagu stripped publican John Phillips of his liquor license for beating a black servant girl. In this case, one might assume that if the servant had been enslaved, Phillips might not have been punished, even if his punishment was disproportionate to his crime. But yet again, propertied employers rarely faced the justice that servants did and their punishments were economic ones. Putting aside the very few anecdotal examples of a black presence in colonial Newfoundland, the fact that the vast majority of the island's colonial population was European did not necessarily indicate a lack of awareness of Africans in the Atlantic or an ignorance of the conditions under which many of them lived. Indeed, it seems counterintuitive to assume that a hub of Atlantic commerce, trade, and communication such as Newfoundland could fail to absorb the full picture of Atlantic slavery. After all, next to opium, the slave trade was the only thing that ever generated more revenue for colonial Britain than dried cod.[183]

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[183] Pope, *Fish into Wine*, 26-7, 212; Ferryland and the Colony of Avalon, Ferryland Names: Some Ferryland Residents since 1597, A-D, retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/ferryland-names.php; Rhea Rollman, "Newfoundland in the Black Imaginary," *The Independent*, September 9, 2016. https://theindependent.ca/news/newfoundland-in-the-black-imaginary/#. CBC News, "Artist Highlights Slave Trade Connection in Bonavista Exhibition," *Canadian Broadcasting*

There are some references within Newfoundland's history and folk culture which communicate an awareness of the position and condition of Africans and people of African descent in the colonial Atlantic. In one of the Jack folktales entitled "Jack and the Duke," the Duke challenges Jack using riddles and wordplay, a clear allusion to the potential duplicity of employers. The Duke offers to pay Jack for any trick that Jack might be able to successfully play on him. In this story, Jack brings his employer a black woman to sleep with rather than the requested white woman. The Duke fires Jack but the hero saves his job by threatening to inform the Duke's wife. Jack tells the Duchess that he was fired for bringing his master a black chicken rather than a white one and his place in the Duke's service is restored. This story communicates an obvious awareness of the social position of black people in the colonial Atlantic, and further, a consciousness of working-class whiteness relative to blackness in colonial America. Exactly what characterized that notion of identity is somewhat unclear. Jack clearly understands that his white elite employer will find the black woman unacceptable and sees no reason not to capitalize upon it for his own benefit. There does not seem to be any sense of identification between the white laboring class and their black counterparts in the New World apparent in this reference. Historian Kelly Best noted that in colonial cities with large black populations both enslaved and free, like Philadelphia and New York, some working-class Irish immigrants perceived their whiteness as a mark of superiority despite the pervasiveness of anti-Irish sentiment among other Americans of European descent.[184]

Corporation, August 18, 2019. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/camille-turner-nl-slave-ships-connection-1.5240589. Keough, *The Slender Thread*, 177, 383-84, 402; Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 201-202; Sweeny, 297; Taylor, 205.

[184] Lovelace, 158-59; Kelly Best, "Making Cool Things Hot Again: Blackface and Newfoundland Mummering," *Ethnologies* 30, no. 2 (Fall 2008): 236.

However, there are some nineteenth-century accounts of mummering in Newfoundland which might indicate such a sense of identification. If they do not, they inarguably demonstrate at least an awareness of the experiences and lives of black people in the colonial Atlantic.

Mummering is a seasonal tradition of costumed dance, parade, and residential visitation which has a long history in the British Isles, particularly England and Ireland. Regional variations of the custom abound but in the Newfoundland tradition, mummers tend to appear only during the liminal period of the Twelve Days of Christmas. People dress for the purposes of preserving anonymity and cover their faces. Some of the most common costumes simply involve borrowing a family members' clothes, with women dressing as men and men dressing as women. St. John's has hosted an annual mummers parade since the cultural revival of the 1970s and in the evenings throughout the Christmas season, outport communities open their homes to mummers who quite literally sing for their supper in their strange and sometimes outlandish disguises. Residents offer gifts of food and drink to the mummers in exchange for entertainment in the form of songs, dances, musical performances, and short plays. Textual evidence of mummering is extremely rare in seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century Newfoundland but it does appear that the British tradition of mummering did take root in some early outport communities. Sir Humphrey Gilbert reportedly had Morris dancers and hobby horses with him when he first landed at Newfoundland in the 1580s. However, there is much more documented evidence of mummering events on the island by the early nineteenth century. These events communicate an awareness of the black presence in the Atlantic in a way that is highly problematic to the modern observer. Newfoundland mummers had,

since at least the early nineteenth century, incorporated face-darkening into their mummering traditions and the practice seems to have disappeared only in the last few decades.[185] The context in which Newfoundlanders embraced these practices at different times requires closer examination.

Best observed that the minstrel show character known as Jim Crow quite promptly made his way into early nineteenth-century Newfoundland culture when he first became popular in North America. There are many references to face-darkening in the much older English mummering tradition, especially among Morris dancers, but no specific mention of it in Newfoundland before the nineteenth century. Documentary evidence shows that during the 1830s, elements of blackface theater emerged in mummering traditions in Newfoundland at roughly the same time that the Jim Crow character was first enjoying enormous popularity among the laboring classes of Atlantic seaboard cities and towns. Protest action among Irish Catholic fishing servants became more pronounced by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as Catholic emancipation proceeded and more middle-class and elite Catholic reformers began to assert more significant influence. Best wonders if the incorporation, not only of face-darkening but also of the actual *character* of Jim Crow into working-class mummer traditions might signal a sense of identification, on the part of Irish Catholic workers, with black people's experiences in the Atlantic.

Best states that there is, of course, no equating the colonial experiences of the two groups. However, it is interesting that the character itself became popular among Newfoundland mummers at about the same time the character gained major popularity in

[185] Best, 215-16, 218-219, 219*n*10.

early minstrel theater in New York and Philadelphia. Not that cultural diffusion across the Atlantic seaboard was unlikely, as these two American cities had strong trade and communications relationships with Newfoundland. What is more interesting to Best is that both African Americans and Irish Catholic Newfoundlanders, particularly servants, were both being granted certain freedoms for the first time, yet were still facing a great deal of struggle and overt discrimination as members of a laboring class and an oppressed ethnicity. Despite their emancipation by the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, black New Yorkers, black Philadelphians, and Irish Catholic Newfoundlanders alike still faced prejudicial barriers to a decent quality of life including access to housing, education, and broader economic opportunity. Concurrently, it is also interesting that the British empire was about the business of abolishing slavery during the early 1830s. Mummering traditions began to seep into working-class protest culture in Newfoundland's larger settlements around the same time and there were often multiple protester/mummers dressed as the popular theater character. There are many possible reasons why they did so, but Best wonders if a sense of identification among Irish Catholic laborers with the contemporaneous struggles of African Americans might be at the root of it.[186]

The Jim Crow character which emerged during the 1830s was very different from what minstrel theater characters became by the 1860s. Created by T.D. Rice in the late 1820s and inspired by his upbringing in the poor, multi-racial, multi-ethnic tenement neighborhoods of New York City, the character of the escaped slave was originally a working-class hero who entertained a working-class audience as racially, ethnically, and

[186] Ibid., 221-24, 236.

religiously diverse as the Atlantic seaport cities they worked in. He was, in fact, not so different from Newfoundland's own Jack, a wily and clever peasant trickster who delighted himself and his audience by humiliating authority figures and the upper classes. The permeation of face-darkening and the adoption of the Jim Crow character into Newfoundland mummering traditions, especially in the context of protest by Irish Catholic workers, clearly demonstrates a general awareness of the presence and the social position of black people in the colonial Atlantic and perhaps also an oppressed laborer's sense of empathy and identification. This impression of empathy is gained because Irish Catholics were marching against oppression by English Protestants costumed as a black working-class hero, an emblem of class rebellion. They do not seem to have been simply "mummering in blackface," although such mummers costumes did take root much later in the nineteenth century, including those of Aunt Jemima and the characters from the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.[187]

One anecdote which potentially adds weight to the notion of working-class Irish identification with Jim Crow occurred in St. John's harbor in 1835, when the fame of Rice's character first reached its height in America. A local trader named Richard Howley had commissioned the building of a new sealing ship named the *Jim Crow* which even featured a carved likeness of the ragged and smiling trickster on the ship's bow. If one thing could be counted upon in seaside fishing settlements in Newfoundland, it was that no matter what coastal town one lived in, there were always ships coming and going. It was rare for the arrival of a new ship, especially one owned by a merchant of no particular distinction, to be attended by any kind of excitement. St. John's was, after all,

[187] Ibid., 224-25, 230-32, 236-37.

the busiest and most visited harbor on the island. The arrival of the *Jim Crow* however, was attended by "hundreds" of local people. Perhaps it was simply the popularity of the character and the novelty of having a ship named for it that had drawn local interest. At the same time, one can just as easily imagine fishing servants and other workers coming out to watch a rich, haughty merchant parade his obvious ignorance of a working-class hero. If the shipbuilders were responsible for the ship's theme, it might signify that Jim Crow had indeed become a familiar and meaningful symbol to Newfoundland's workers. If the ship's theme were the merchant's idea, Best theorizes that he likely chose it to intimidate his Irish-Catholic workers, most of whom were recent immigrants and all of whom were poor, by making them work on a boat named for a slave – a clear communication of his disdain for them. In that case, one can imagine rough hands smothering laughter and hiding snide smiles throughout the crowd as workers marveled at the obliviousness of the ship's master in his choice of mascot, who did not realize that he was now the butt of his own cruel joke.

Best goes on to describe the evolution of American minstrel theater and the Jim Crow character by the 1860s. She notes that by the eve of the Civil War, minstrel theater had drawn a much more homogeneous, white, middle-class audience and the Jim Crow character himself became the object of the audience's ridicule for his simplicity, stupidity, and ragged appearance rather than the working-class hero humiliating elites before a delighted, diverse, and plebeian audience that he had been thirty years before. Moreover, American minstrel theater characters had diversified during the interim and by

the 1860s, such performances now also featured Irish, German, Polish, and Jewish characters as figures of ridicule.[188]

All this being said, there is also evidence of Newfoundlanders trying to work out the same kinds of racial tensions which have been documented in colonial cities with much higher black populations. Face-darkening itself is problematic enough but even local practices throughout the outports signal awareness of the sociocultural experience of people of African descent in the Atlantic basin, and in familiarly negative and pejorative ways. For many decades, Spaniard's Bay had a tradition known as "Ni**er Night" which persisted into the twentieth century. This event resembled hazing traditions in which community members would attempt to chase and catch others for the purposes of forcibly darkening the pursued person's face with black paint or polish. Newfoundland English has also retained the same negative/positive associations with concepts of blackness and whiteness which characterize regional variations across the English-speaking world. Blackness has frequently been used to denote strangers and "others" in both religious and ethnic characteristics, whereas whiteness has tended to denote purity, honesty, and trustworthy familiarity.[189] Such examples illustrate that Newfoundlanders, like many other European colonists to North America, were as cognizant of the black experience in the colonial and nineteenth-century Atlantic as any other region, even in the absence of a black population of any significant size. Moreover, such examples also demonstrate that many Newfoundlanders absorbed the concept of whiteness as a mark of superiority just as their more southerly Atlantic counterparts had.

[188] Ibid., 225, 236-39, 240-41.
[189] Ibid., 224, 234-35.

This reinforces the notion of interconnectedness which comprises the Atlantic perspective and provides greater support for its usefulness as a historical framework.

The lack of institutional presence in seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century Newfoundland does not necessarily indicate either colonial failure or a comparatively poorer quality of life than elsewhere in the New World. The absence of much institutional infrastructure did create challenges for settlers, but *ad hoc* and naval institutions functioned sufficiently to serve the needs of the population. Moreover, they did so with a measure of informality and regional uniqueness common to most colonial Atlantic regions who were all situated in quite a similarly remote fashion from the mother country. Further, this institutional dearth suggests a level of personal liberty touted by various American historiographic traditions as ideal. Limited government interference, periodically unfettered trade, religious freedom, sexual freedom, legal freedoms, geographic mobility, and a somewhat more merciful and humane justice system than the traditional historiography suggests - these were the benefits possible for colonial Newfoundland's working class to varying degrees at varying intervals during the study period. Yet, these benefits also came at the incalculable cost of indigenous dispossession and extinction as well as African enslavement, both of which invariably accompanied the British colonial process. While Newfoundland's working class, particularly Irish Catholics, may have possessed a sense of identification with fellow North American racialized workers during the early nineteenth century based on notions of shared oppression, the concept of white liberty may also have been as strongly connected to the notions of black slavery or black oppression in the Newfoundland consciousness as was the case in other Atlantic regions, even those regions with negligible black populations.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

As time passes, North American historiography invariably proves as changeable and unpredictable as Newfoundland's storied climate. And yet, there remain residual effects from the enduring forces of nationalism, exceptionalism, and hagiography which have clouded interpretations of colonial history and marginalized the coverage of particular regions, including Newfoundland. However, the increasingly broader prevalence of the Atlantic perspective and the wider availability in recent decades of archaeological, documentary, and oral history sources have made it possible for Newfoundland to become more visible within the colonial historical discourse. During the last half-century, Newfoundland scholars have effectively challenged the historiography and historical perspectives which characterize the island's colonial society as a failed enterprise or as little more than a seasonal fishing station; nothing could be further from the truth. Newfoundland was a long-time staple of British expansion and colonialism, a crucial node in the Atlantic economy, and a major hub for information, trade, and colonial support. The ethnic and cultural identities which continue to predominate today on the island were forged early on during the colonial period as the fishery boomed, the population slowly but steadily expanded, and residents and officials worked to create the means for order, safety, and justice in a frontier society. Far from

being a simple fishing station, the island's settled communities became as culturally distinct as any other colonial Atlantic region. Newfoundland's culture is unique enough to have made possible the publication of an entire *Dictionary of Newfoundland English*, in fact. However, what is most remarkable about the study of colonial Newfoundland are the numerous similarities and connections the island shares with virtually all other regions of the Atlantic basin throughout the early modern period. Because the traditional historiography impeded the illumination of Newfoundland's very presence as a colony, both the similarities to other colonial experiences and the unique differences, such as the interesting advantages enjoyed by Newfoundland's settlers and workers, have likewise remained virtually unexplored by any but a few regional scholars.

Newfoundlanders have continually confronted significant hardships and difficulties since the establishment of the first seventeenth-century colonies. The working class, heavily represented by fishing servants, particularly faced tough conditions surrounding employment and salaries, and independent households faced struggles with credit and debts. In addition to these challenges, the lack of political representation, the lack of access to property, and the informal, sometimes harsh, nature of the justice system no doubt appear to the traditional American, Canadian, or British historical perspectives as clear denials of liberty. This undoubtedly speaks disquiet to those who tend towards the colonial concept of "a city upon a hill," a standard which no colony achieved in reality. Jerry Bannister thoughtfully observed that Newfoundland's governing regime was in one sense utterly unique in the colonial world. Most regions, he noted, could be defined either according to the representative government model or the master/slave paradigm. Newfoundland was neither and could perhaps in some ways be

described as a mixture of both: authoritarian rule over free men.[190] However, there were limits to the reach of this supposed imperial authoritarianism, just as there were limits to imperial reach elsewhere in the colonial Atlantic. As a result of both this distance from the reach of imperial forces and the need for the fishery to function optimally and uninterrupted, conditions were created for a unique brand of working-class liberty which might seem interesting and more than a little familiar, particularly to American historians but also to historians of the Western world in general.

The opportunities for self-sufficiency, family prosperity, limited government, unfettered trade, and minimal social controls make colonial Newfoundland sound downright Jeffersonian. Frederick Jackson Turner and his adherents might have found Newfoundland, with its relatively small landmass, lack of access to freehold property, slow penetration of European encroachment, and long periods of isolation between First Nations and European peoples, to be a fascinating case study for his frontier thesis. Economic and social historians would undoubtedly be interested in the surprising opportunities for competitive wages and economic advancement in the colonial fishery relative to other laboring occupations in the Atlantic basin. Scholars of women's history would find fascinating bases of comparison between women's social positions, legal rights, economic opportunities, and sexual freedoms in Newfoundland and those of other colonies. There really seems to be no legitimate reason for the island's continued marginalization within broader colonial narratives. Comparative studies of Newfoundland and contemporaneous Atlantic regions, or studies exploring the connections between Newfoundland and the rest of the New World seem like the most

[190] Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 288.

suitable way forward to achieve fuller integration. Multiple factors make Newfoundland worthy both of study and of further integration into the dialogue of colonial history: its strategic, geographic, and economic importance within the Atlantic basin, its marked similarities to colonial experiences of life elsewhere, and its unique social and cultural differences from her North American neighbors. In many ways, Newfoundland's history embodies the Atlantic perspective; while it is true that the region's ethnic makeup is still overwhelmingly white English and Irish families, virtually every Atlantic seafarer of the colonial period made landfall at Newfoundland at one time or another. The names of regions, roads, towns, harbors, and ports speak eloquently of the international diversity which the island has seen over nearly six centuries of fishery and settlement activity: the English Shore, the French Shore, the Irish Loop, Spaniard's Bay, Port aux Basques, Harbor Breton, and Portugal Cove. Yet, not all of Newfoundland's people are nearly as well represented as the island's European inhabitants.

In many other parts of North America, indigenous names remain attached to regions colonized by Europeans such as Massachusetts, Teotihuacán, and Saskatchewan. On the island of Newfoundland, no indigenous place names remain despite the continued presence in the province of indigenous groups following the demise of the Beothuk, including the Mi'kmaq, Innu, and Inuit. These names are now lost, disappeared with the advent and continued encroachment of Europeans. Only Labrador retains a significant number of indigenous names for cities and towns. Still, even in Labrador, the majority of cities and towns bear names of European origin. In Newfoundland, the only reminders of the province's indigenous past include places like Indian Cove and Red Indian Lake, a fact which has recently spurred a campaign to change the name of the latter location.

In March 2020, after long international negotiations, the bodies of two early nineteenth-century Beothuk people, known as Nonosabasut and Demasduit, were returned to Newfoundland. The two were exhumed from their original burials nearly two centuries ago and sent to the University of Edinburgh for study and preservation. Thanks to indigenous activism in Newfoundland, their bodies may now finally be respectfully laid to rest at Red Indian Lake, which was the site of a thriving Beothuk settlement during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The solemn homecoming of Nonosabasut and Demasduit has spurred discussion of the problematic nature of the name, Red Indian Lake, and indeed, other similarly-named sites in Newfoundland and Labrador. One can easily draw parallels between this campaign and, for example, the contemporary campaigns in the United States to remove Confederate monuments or to emphasize critical race theory in history-teaching. As is the case with other similar initiatives designed to promote racial/ethnic representation and educate the public about systemic or historically-entrenched racism, the proposed name change has been met with some controversy. Indigenous leaders and groups, their allies, and supporters have proposed to change the name of Red Indian Lake to "Wantaqo'ti Qospem," meaning "peaceful lake" in the language of the Mi'kmaq. The predominantly white residents of three nearby towns however, have opposed the name change altogether. Some defenders of the old name claim that the "red" label refers to the characteristic red ochre worn by the Beothuk rather than the far more offensive suggestion of skin color. Indigenous commentators continue to insist nonetheless that Indian is both an unacceptable and an offensive name for North America's First Nations peoples.[191] The ultimate outcome of

[191] Sarah Smellie, "NL Minister says Red Indian Lake name 'not really acceptable,' new name forthcoming," 8 June 2021, *The Toronto Star*, retrieved 16 August, 2021.

this campaign is still uncertain but more regular discussion of regional indigenous history and the ability to actually hear indigenous voices within Newfoundland's cultural and historical dialogue suggests that historical representation of the island's indigenous past will be given ever-increasing priority in the coming decades. This process will no doubt be assisted by ongoing archaeological work being undertaken at historic indigenous sites across Newfoundland and the collection of oral traditions from resident First Nations groups. Additional studies of Newfoundland's indigenous past are definitely merited as discoveries continue and local participation by First Nations groups increases.

Newfoundland has been noticeably slower than the rest of North America to show an increase in racial diversity. However, in the last three decades, St. John's in particular has become somewhat more diverse thanks to increased immigration and a burgeoning international student population at the Memorial University of Newfoundland, whose reputation for excellent educational standards and lower international tuition fees make it increasingly attractive to students from around the world. Nonetheless, the island remains one of the most racially homogeneous regions in all of Canada. Yet, as diversity increases, especially at MUN, a deeper look at the historical experiences of people of color in Newfoundland might be undertaken. Even if the province's ethnic makeup remains mostly unchanged, the interconnected nature of the Atlantic perspective still makes such topics as the black experience in Newfoundland well worthy of study.

Perhaps additional documentary or archaeological resources may yet be uncovered which illuminate Newfoundland's connections with the black Atlantic. The fact that people of African descent appear minimally in extant colonial documents

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https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2021/06/08/nl-minister-says-red-indian-lake-name-not-really-acceptable-new-name-forthcoming.html.

concerning Newfoundland is not an automatic indicator of their absence. Demographic records from colonial Newfoundland are sparse to begin with compared, for example, with New England. Historian Miranda Kauffman recently identified and documented several hundred people of African descent permanently residing in England as early as the reign of Henry VII, more than a century prior to the beginning of active Newfoundland settlement. Virtually none of these individuals were enslaved but worked in various trades within their communities. English history has only recently begun to explore the early modern period with specific attention to English people of African descent. Therefore, it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that the black presence in Newfoundland might likewise have been more significant than historians have supposed. Black sailors, merchants, and adventurers in the Atlantic, of whom there were many, would almost certainly have made landfall at Newfoundland at one time or another.[192] Perhaps there are still letters, inventories, wills, court records, and ship's lists resting in university archives, library archives, or personal collections around the Atlantic basin which will illuminate a more robust black presence in Newfoundland, adding to the already comprehensive work being published recently on the early modern "black Atlantic." Indeed, the Atlantic perspective will likely remain key to Newfoundland's greater integration into American, Canadian, and British historical dialogues in general.

Jerry Bannister astutely observed that one should never conflate the growth of state-building institutions, such as a justice system, with the growth of social justice. Newfoundland was hardly a "city upon a hill"; then again, neither was New England, and

[192] Miranda Kaufmann, *Black Tudors: The Untold Story* (e-book) (One World, 2017), 72, 218-19.

nor did any other colony turn out to fit that mold.[193] The lack of access to freehold property in Newfoundland and the lack of formal institutions of all sorts including representative government, schools, churches, and clergy undoubtedly would have made more southerly colonists quail. Moreover, working-class conceptions of liberty have not always been comprehensible to elites or to the middle class.

In the colonial Atlantic world, those that valued domestic bliss, gentility, or the security offered by regulatory institutions were often horrified by the conditions in working-class communities. Most workers were either illiterate or partly-literate and therefore had little need for books. Neither did they have much interest in the increasingly apparent markers of gentility such as fine furniture, plate, or musical instruments which were as much prized by the Newfoundland gentry as by colonial elites elsewhere. Newfoundland workers, however, were proto-capitalist consumers every bit as much as the colonial gentry. Yet, at the end of a hard day, a worker was more likely to appreciate a comfortable room, a good meal, a warm fire, and a few luxury consumables such as alcohol and tobacco. They lived lives of sufficiency and gratitude for the small pleasures their labor afforded them. From the seventeenth through the early nineteenth century in Newfoundland, working-class people attended religious services but only of their own volition and on their own terms. They enjoyed social and sexual freedoms which would have invited public censure or punishment in other colonies. They developed access to justice, equitable legal rights, and dispute resolution for themselves while allowing certain personal liberties to remain sacrosanct. There is no doubt that, in many ways, daily life was exceptionally challenging for colonial Newfoundlanders. Yet,

[193] Bannister, *The Rule of the Admirals*, 5-6, 288.

a combination of unique factors including economic opportunity, geographic mobility, physical health and safety, longevity, greater gender equity, and personal liberty made colonial Newfoundland resemble something approaching a workers' paradise.

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Written over two decades from 1630 to 1651, *Of Plymouth Plantation*, the journal of William Bradford, documents the exodus of the *Mayflower* passengers from England, their relatively brief sojourn in the Netherlands, their transatlantic voyage, the establishment of Plymouth Colony, and the development of both the settlement and relationships with Native American communities. The difficulties surrounding the establishment of settlement in Plymouth are useful for comparison to contemporary Newfoundland due to the roughly similar geographic, climactic, and temporal conditions of the two regions.

Calvert, Cecil. "Extract from Libel [in Baltimore vs. David Kirke]." Great Britain, PRO, High Court of Admiralty, HCA 24/110 (329). MHA 16-B-5-020. Published in Gillian T. Cell (ed.), *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization: 1610-1630*, 298-99. London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982. Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/cecil-calvert-extract-libel-1651.php.

This court document, part of the record of legal proceedings against David Kirke, testifies that George Calvert took possession of the province of Avalon in Newfoundland during the reign of King James I (1620s) and describes the development of the settlement at Ferryland, with particular reference to the cost of the development, which the document estimates at £20,000. It is worth noting that this figure has been repeatedly challenged in multiple sources, and represents the high end of estimates of the amount of George Calvert's investment in the colony of Avalon.

Calvert, George. "Letter to King Charles I." Great Britain, PRO, Colonial Office, CO 1/5 (27), 75. MHA 16-B-2-011. Transcribed by Peter E. Pope. Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/george-calvert-letter-1629.php.

George Calvert, first Lord Baltimore, wrote this letter to King Charles I in August 1629, one year after Calvert settled in Newfoundland. Calvert expressed gratitude for the favor and indulgence bestowed on him by both King Charles, and by his late father, King James I, who had originally granted Calvert's proprietorship of Avalon. Calvert also used this opportunity to deny the charges leveled at him by the Protestant minister, Erasmus Stourton, referring to Stourton as "wicked," "audacious," "slanderous," and

"false." In this letter, Calvert dolefully reported that he was convinced his agents in Newfoundland had lied to him about the supposedly hospitable nature of the country and climate, and due to the harshness and length of the Newfoundland winter he had recently experienced, he intended to "leave this place to the fishermen" and seek a proprietorship further south in the Chesapeake region. Calvert humbly begged King Charles to grant him an additional proprietorship, saying it was his goal to expand New World settlement, to the greater glory of England and her king.

Cell, Gillian T. *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization: 1610-1630*. London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982.

This source is an edited collection of primary sources including naval and shipping records, colonial propaganda tracts, letters, journal entries, and records of legal proceedings, all related to the economic and settlement activities of the British in Newfoundland primarily during the seventeenth century. The introduction, written by editor and historian Gillian Cell, provides a brief overview of the challenges and successes of the English fishing and settler interests in the region, as well as the unique economic, political, and social character of the colonies compared to others established by the English.

Clappe, John. "Petition to William III." Great Britain, PRO, Colonial Office, CO 194/1 (6), 14. CNS Microfilm. Transcribed by Peter E. Pope. Retrieved 27 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/petition-john-clappe-1697.php.

This document, written in 1697, represents the efforts of the inhabitants of Ferryland, Newfoundland to secure imperial assistance in the restoration of their homes and livelihoods following the French invasion of the southern shore in 1696. The petition usefully details the value of all properties and goods lost in the raid, as well as the names of the petitioners resident at Ferryland prior to the raid.

Cruse, Thomas. "Deposition [taken at Totnes, before commissioners appointed by the Privy Council]." West Devon Record Office, Plymouth W360/74. Published in J.J. Beckerlegge (ed.), "Plymouth Muniments and Newfoundland," in *Annual Reports and Transactions of the Plymouth Institution* 18 (1945): 2-23. Transcribed by Peter E. Pope. Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/thomas-cruse-deposition-1667.php.

In the deposition taken on November 27th 1667 in the matter of Cecil Calvert's suit against Sir David Kirke, Thomas Cruse detailed his experience of eighteen years living at Newfoundland, both prior to and following Sir David Kirke's acquisition of the Calvert family's Poole Plantation at Ferryland. Cruse's testimony details the changes Kirke made to Calvert's colony and the surrounding region of the southern Avalon including fortifications, the imposition of rents, liquor licensing fees, and impost fees. Further, Cruse's deposition confirms the almost total lack of religious or ecclesiastical infrastructure in seventeenth-century Newfoundland.

Cull, John. "Deposition [taken at Totnes, before commissioners appointed by the Privy Council]." West Devon Record Office, Plymouth W360/74. Published in J.J. Beckerlegge (ed.), "Plymouth Muniments and Newfoundland," in *Annual Reports and Transactions of the Plymouth Institution* 18 (1945): 2-23. Transcribed by Peter E. Pope. Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/john-cull-deposition-1667.php.

John Cull's deposition in Cecil Calvert's suit against David Kirke is similar that of Thomas Cruse. Cull also testified to the changes Kirke made at Ferryland and other nearby settlements in the region in the areas of governance, fortification, regulation of the fishery, and of local merchant activities. Both depositions seem to suggest that Kirke acquired unfair monopolies over settler provisions and this would not be a surpassing surprise considering Kirke was much less a gentleman proprietor like Calvert than an ambitious middle-class merchant who had achieved a recent rise in status. Because of the highly partial nature of this document as well Cruse's deposition, both of these documents should be treated with skepticism, particularly with reference to the supposed impact of Kirke's regulatory and mercantile activities at Ferryland. One must keep in mind that these depositions were taken by the counsel for Cecil Calvert who was seeking to regain the title to his father's estate from a new royal administration, since the previous king had awarded it to Kirke. The claims that Kirke's innovations had only negative impacts and that prior to Kirke's assumption of leadership, Newfoundland had experienced no difficulties related to the island's defense or regulation of its fishery should certainly be taken with a grain of salt.

Ferryland and the Colony of Avalon. Documents: Documents Relating to Ferryland: 1597 to 1726. Compiled by Peter E. Pope (1993). Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/ferryland-documents-table-contents.php.

In an effort to produce a comprehensive collection of documentary sources which shed light on conditions and experiences of life in colonial Avalon and Ferryland, historian Peter Pope assembled this collection of one hundred and four varied documents spanning the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Source types include letters, journal entries, travel accounts, shipping records, petitions, state documents, legal depositions and examinations, wills, inventories, financial records, and census data for various Newfoundland settlements at different times. Individual sources specifically referenced in the text of this study are listed separately in this bibliography.

Ferryland and the Colony of Avalon. Ferryland Names: Some Ferryland Residents since 1597, A-Z. Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/ferryland-names.php.

This section of the Avalon archive features an alphabetized database of names of documented residents of Ferryland from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries with brief, corresponding biographical details. The database draws from primary documents compiled by historian Peter Pope and from the personal collection of local amateur historian and native of Ferryland, Dorothy Agriesti. The archive is an ongoing

work-in-progress, featuring prominently displayed contact information for individuals to submit additional names and details from any privately collected sources. The current database is extensive featuring the names and details of hundreds of past residents of colonial Avalon.

Ferryland and the Colony of Avalon. Miscellaneous Artifacts from Ferryland Archaeological Site, NL. Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/ferryland-documents-table-contents.php.

This section of a broader archive features first, seven pages of images and descriptions of varied artifacts recovered from the Colony of Avalon dig site including remnants of weaponry, tools, glass and gilt buttons, glass bottles and windowpanes, religious symbols, pewter and clay pipe fragments, plates, bowls, spoons, knives, cooking pots, pitchers, storage vessels, gold and brass jewelry, shoe buckles, even musical instruments like a mouth harp. These artifacts reveal much about material culture and the breadth of Newfoundland trade and buying power in the Atlantic, since most artifacts recovered from the site were, in all likelihood, not produced there. Second, this archive section features six pages of images and descriptions of pipe makers' marks, preceded by an introduction dealing specifically with the English/Dutch/Newfoundland tobacco trade, and the broad prevalence of tobacco smoking among Newfoundlanders, a noted luxury for seventeenth-century Europeans. Clay pipe fragments remain one of the most frequently recovered type of artifact at the Avalon site, illustrating just how accessible a luxury tobacco was at Ferryland.

Ferryland and the Colony of Avalon. The Artifacts. 17th and 18th Century Bottle Seals from Ferryland, NL. Heritage Newfoundland and Labrador. Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/bottle-seals-introduction.php.

This government-sponsored online archive contains a brief introduction and two pages featuring images and descriptions of seventeenth and eighteenth-century bottle seals, artifacts recovered from the Colony of Avalon dig site. These artifacts testify to the wealth of a number of local planters, since the sealing and personalizing of wine bottles was an expensive practice which might have been undertaken to deter theft, or to advertise the vintner's or trader's business, but was often also undertaken to impress contemporaries or to commemorate occasions such as weddings or births.

Gaulton, Barry C., and Aaron F. Miller. "Edward Wynne's *The Brittish India or A Compendious Discourse tending to Advancement* (circa 1630-1631)." *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 24, no. 1 (2009): 111-137.

This article presents the full text of Wynne's seventeenth-century pamphlet which advocated English settlement on the eastern shore of the Newfoundland's Avalon Peninsula as well as recommendations for the location, development, and fortification of settlements. In his treatise, Wynne discussed the successes he had presided over at Ferryland on the proprietor Sir George Calvert's behalf and his disappointment at

Calvert's abandonment of the colony for another proprietorship in Maryland. Gaulton and Miller provide a brief introduction analyzing Wynne's document and discussing his pivotal role in laying the foundations for what was to become a lucrative and fairly well-defended colony.

Guy, John. "Letter from John Guy to Sir Percival Willoughby." Nottingham University, Middleton, MSS, Mi X 1/2. Printed in Gillian T. Cell (ed.), *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630*, 60-65. London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982.

In this letter written in October of 1610, John Guy details his voyage to found the colony of Cupids, his impressions of the region, and the work that had already been completed in the establishment of the settlement. Guy assures the investors of the Newfoundland Company that the venture has had a promising beginning and shares his impressions of the diverse possibilities for economic development of the colony including fishing, husbandry, agriculture, mining, and carpentry.

Guy, John. "Letter to John Slany." Published in Samuel Purchas, *His Pilgrims*, vol. 4 (1625, London, 1907), 417-18. Reprinted in David B. Quinn (ed.), *New American World: A Documentary History of North America to 1612*, vol. 4, *Newfoundland from Fishery to Colony: Northwest Passage Searches* (New York, 1979), 150-51. Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/john-guy-letter-1612.php.

In this document, John Guy, governor of the Cupids colony and agent on behalf of the Newfoundland Company, informs the company treasurer, council, and investors of the attack and plunder along the length of the English Shore by the notorious pirate, Peter Easton, during the spring and summer of 1612. Guy's letter reinforces Newfoundland's important and strategic position in the Atlantic and provides context for the calls for defensive measures which began to increase on the island in the ensuing years.

Hakluyt, Richard. "The voyage of Master Charles Leigh, and divers others to Cape Breton and the Isle of Ramea." Published in Richard Hakluyt, *The Principall Navigations of the English Nation* (London, 1600). Reprinted in Richard Hakluyt, *Voyages* vol. 6 (London, 1907), 100-114. Revised by Peter E. Pope. Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/richard-hakluyt-voyage-1597.php.

This source documents the transatlantic voyages of the *Hopewell* and *Chancewell*, both of London, and reinforces the claim that Newfoundland was the logical first port of call for ships crossing the Atlantic from northwestern Europe to rest and re-supply. The description of the voyage also contributes to clearer estimates of the duration and conditions of transatlantic crossings.

Hoskins, Nicholas. "A Copy of a Letter from N.H. a Gentleman living at Ferryland in New-found-land, to a worthy friend W.P. of the 18 of August 1622." Published in Richard Whitbourne, *A Discourse and Discovery of New-found-land* (London,

1622). Reprinted in Gillian T. Cell (ed.), *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630*, 204-206. London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982. Revised by Peter E. Pope. Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/nicholas-hoskins-letter-1622.php.

Ferryland resident Nicholas Hoskins wrote to a friend back in England about the bounty of resources to be found in Newfoundland including the forage, fuel, game, and fresh water sources. Hoskins notably held similar impressions about Newfoundland winters that Captain Wynne did in his letters to George Calvert, lending support to the idea that Wynne was being honest about his belief in Newfoundland winters being less harsh than English ones. Hoskins' letter provides further proof that the 1621-1622 winter at Ferryland must have been exceptionally mild, and far less harsh than the winter that Calvert himself would experience in 1628-1629.

Kirke, David, and Nicholas Shapley. "Invoice of Goods Shipped Aboard the *David* of Ferryland." Published in James P. Baxter (ed.), *Documentary History of the State of Maine*, vol. 6, *The Baxter Manuscripts* (Portland, Maine, 1900): 2-4. Revised by Peter E. Pope. Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/kirke-shapley-invoice-1648.php.

This document, dated September 1648, lists an inventory and values for all goods, bills of debt and passengers entrusted to Captain Shapley, agent for Sir David Kirke, for distribution during his voyage. Shapley agrees that he will return the proceeds (some £613) from the trading voyage no later than the following spring, "the danger of the sea excepted." The goods representing the greatest value include wines, sugar, and canvas cloth. Also shipped aboard the *David*: salt, tobacco, and ready-made clothing items such as stockings and shoes. This wide variety of goods shows the lucrative and pan-Atlantic trade relationships which the Kirke plantation at Newfoundland was able to cultivate working in the Newfoundland fishery, with the Iberian peninsula, the Mediterranean, Northwestern Europe, the Caribbean, the Chesapeake, and New England.

Mitchels, John. Extract from "A List of the Inhabitants Names, the Number of their Families…Anno. 1708." Great Britain, PRO, Colonial Office, CO 194/4 (76ii), 253-256v, see f. 253. CNS microfilm. Transcribed by Peter E. Pope. Retrieved 27 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/inhabitants-ferryland-1708.php.

Recorded in December of 1708, the census of Captain John Mitchels of the HMS *Warwick* documents the names of seventeen planters resident at Ferryland. In addition, each planter's wife, number of children, and servants are listed, but not named. Mitchels documented the number of boats, skiffs, and train vats owned by each individual planter, as well as the amounts of fish and train oil each produced during the preceding season.

Norris, John. "An Account of the Inhabitants in Ferryland and Caplin Bay, 1698." Extract from "An Abstract of the Planters and Boatkeepers and What Voyages They Have Made This Year in Newfoundland, 1698." Great Britain, PRO, Colonial Office, CO 194/1 (125i), 262. CNS microfilm. Transcribed by Peter E.

Pope. Retrieved 27 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/inhabitants-ferryland-caplin-bay-1698.php.

Recorded in September of 1698, the census of Commodore John Norris lists the numbers, though not the names, of all planters, servants, women, and children at Ferryland and Caplin Bay, as well as the total number of inhabitants overwintering that year. Also noted are the total number of boats employed by the region's fishery and the total amount of fish produced that season by the locals.

Penn, William. Excerpts from "A Letter from William Penn, Proprietary and Governor of Pennsylvania in America, to the Committee of the Free Society of Traders of that Province residing in London" (London 1683), 2-9. Reprinted in John McNamara, "Lesson Plan." Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.gilderlehrman.org/sites/default/files/inline-pdfs/William%20Penn%20and%20Colonial%20America.pdf.

This document reads very clearly as colonial propaganda designed to attract settlement in Pennsylvania. William Penn extols the virtues of the countryside, including its agricultural potential, rich forage resources, fresh water sources, wild fish and game, and biodiverse forests and plant life. Penn also described the neighboring Native American groups as friendly and peaceable, with whom the earliest colonists had established positive and promising trade relationships and much goodwill.

Powell, Daniel. "Another Letter to Master Secretary Calvert, from Captain Daniel Powell, who conducted the new supply of men, that went for the plantation, the last spring, dated at Ferryland, 28th July 1622." Published in Richard Whitbourne, *A Discourse and Discovery of New-found-land* (London, 1622). Reprinted in Gillian T. Cell (ed.), *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630*, 198-200. London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982. Revised by Peter E. Pope. Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/daniel-powell-letter-1622.php.

Shipmaster and agent of George Calvert, Daniel Powell was charged with bringing the settlers and provisions requested the year previously by Captain Winne at Ferryland. Powell wrote to his patron informing him of the difficulties of the transatlantic journey, of the progress made on the settlement at Ferryland since the previous year, and general commentary on the condition of the country. Powell lamented the rapacious and wasteful cutting of the forests by migratory fishermen and their nasty habit of leaving significant amounts of fallen timber to rot, obstructing activities between the forests and the shore. He acknowledges that Ferryland is the "coldest harbour in the land" but seems to be under the same impressions as Captain Winne about the ease of survival during a Newfoundland winter. After viewing part of Calvert's land grant between Aquaforte and Ferryland, Powell proposed to spearhead the development of another plantation on Calvert's behalf and requested thirteen men and enough provisions to undertake the project.

Stock, Simon. "Letter to Propaganda Fide." Archives Propaganda Fide, SOCG, vol. 100, 263rv, B:f.266r. Published in Luca Codignola (ed.), *The Coldest Harbour of the Land: Simon Stock and Lord Baltimore's Colony in Newfoundland, 1621-1649*, trans. Anita Weston. Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988, 121-22. Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/simon-stock-letter-1631.php.

The Catholic monk, Brother Simon Stock, wrote this letter to the Church's 'Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith,' exhorting them to establish a colony of Italians in the Americas, led by a bishop, to undertake the conversion of the colonists living there. Stock's letter describes the previous winter of 1628-1629 as having been "extremely cold and the earth sterile." This adds weight to George Calvert's claim that the winter, the first and last he would spend in Newfoundland, was exceptionally harsh. Stock reports that nearly all the resident Catholics at Ferryland returned to England after Calvert's departure, leaving behind "two or three Catholic women" and "some thirty heretics."

Stourton, Erasmus. "Examination before the Justices of the Peace at Plymouth." Great Britain, PRO, Colonial Office, CO 1/4 (59), 144. MHA 16-B-2-016. Published in Gillian T. Cell (ed.), *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630*, 284-85. London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982. Revised by Peter E. Pope. Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/erasmus-stourton-examination-1628.php.

This document is an official record of the examination and testimony of Protestant preacher Erasmus Stourton, as taken by the mayor of Plymouth and two justices of the peace. Stourton testified that in George Calvert's colony, the English Penal Laws forbidding the practice of Catholicism were being flouted at Ferryland. He also expressed outrage against the alleged Catholic baptism of a child from a Protestant family, and against the family's will. Stourton also assured the examiners that he would promptly travel to London to inform the Privy Council of the same.

Vaughn, William. *The Newlanders Cure*. Printed by Nicholas Okes (London, 1630). Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://quod.lib.umich.edu/e/eebo/A14301.0001.001?view=toc.

This text contains medical advice for colonial settlers in Newfoundland and was likely inspired by the difficulties encountered by Sir George Calvert's colony at Ferryland during the winter of 1628-29, after which Calvert departed from Newfoundland with his family and a significant proportion of the settlers. Vaughn might also have been informed by the communications from the Cupids settlers. The text lists cures for various ailments including seasickness, scurvy, fever, gout, colic, and others.

Whitbourne, Richard. "A Discourse and Discovery of New-Found-Land." Printed in London by Felix Kingston, 1622 (version B). Reprinted in Gillian T. Cell (ed.),

Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630, 101-95. London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982.

In this short book, Richard Whitbourne, veteran sea captain and fishing master, sought to add his voice to the number of colonial propagandists who had, for some years since, encouraged the English colonization of Newfoundland. Whitbourne's main argument in favor of English settlement chiefly concerns control of the lucrative fishery, but he also correctly anticipated the strategic and geographic importance which Newfoundland would come to possess as English colonial expansion, then in its very infancy, continued on the west side of the Atlantic.

Winne, Edward. "A Letter from Captaine Edward Winne, Governor of the Colony at Ferryland, within the Province of Avalon, in Newfoundland, unto the Right Honourable Sir George Calvert, Knight, his Majesties Principall Secretary, July 1622." Published in Richard Whitbourne, *A Discourse and Discovery of New-found-land* (London, 1622). Reprinted in Gillian T. Cell (ed.), *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630*, 195-98. London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982. Revised by Peter E. Pope. Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/edward-wynne-letter-28-july-1622.php.

In this letter, Captain Winne apprises George Calvert of all that he and his fellow colonists have achieved during the year passed at Ferryland including the growth of diverse crops and the completion of the mansion house, kitchen, forge, wharf, saltworks, and town well. Projects still underway included the bake/brewhouse and enough houses (more permanent than the temporary cabins erected the previous year) built alongside the mansion house to make "a prettie street." After his first winter in Ferryland, Winne described the Newfoundland climate as "better and not so cold as England," illustrating that the winter of 1621-1622 must have been much milder than usual, giving both Winne and Calvert the impression that year-round survival in Newfoundland required little adaptation.

Winne, Edward. "A Letter Written by Captaine Edward Winne, to the Right Honorable, Sir George Calvert, Knight, his Majesties Principall Secretary: from Ferryland in Newfoundland, the 26 of August 1621" (London, 1621). Reprinted in Gillian T. Cell (ed.), *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630*, 253-57. London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982. Revised by Peter E. Pope. Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/edward-winne-letter-26-august-1621.php.

Captain Winne, agent of the Avalon proprietor George Calvert, wrote this letter two months after his arrival at Ferryland. In the letter, he updates Calvert on the progress made towards establishing the colony, including the foundations and framing for multiple buildings, rudimentary defenses, and building positive relationships with the migratory fishing masters who annually visited Ferryland and other locales on what was to become the "English Shore." Winne's letter also contains detailed descriptions of the

surrounding country and resources available for the development and flourishing of the colony, as well as requests for specific goods and resources to be shipped to Newfoundland the following year.

Winne, Edward. "Another Letter of the 28th of August, from the said Captain Winne, unto Master Secretary Calvert" (London, 1621). Reprinted in Gillian T. Cell (ed.), *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630*, 253-57. London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982. Revised by Peter E. Pope. Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/edward-winne-letter-28-august-1621.php.

Written two days after his letter of 26th August 1621 to the same George Calvert, this letter serves mostly as a postscript to Winne's last letter. Winne again assures Calvert of the brisk pace of development at Ferryland and requests that in addition to tools and victuals, twenty more people, including women, should be brought to the colony the following year.

Winne, Edward. "Another Letter to Master Secretary Calvert, from Captaine Winne, of the 17th of August 1622." Published in Richard Whitbourne, *A Discourse and Discovery of New-found-land* (London, 1622). Reprinted in Gillian T. Cell (ed.), *Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonization, 1610-1630*, 200-204. London: The Hakluyt Society, 1982. Revised by Peter E. Pope. Retrieved 25 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/edward-wynne-letter-17-august-1622.php.

Captain Winne here informs George Calvert of the promising progress of his crops at Ferryland, of the rich forage resources available, and of his ongoing contact with local migratory fishermen. Winne seems to suggest that he experienced somewhat less friendly relations with the migrants than he experienced the year before. He concurs with Captain Powell on the nasty tendency of migrants to litter land of significant potential with unwanted, rotting timber, as well as their habit of dumping ballast into the harbor, despite Winne's presence and prohibitions against it. The Captain requested defensive guns, fowling pieces, a plough, and more skilled tradesmen be sent to Ferryland including masons, carpenters, quarrymen, and slaters. He also specifically requested "a couple of strong maids that can both brew and bake." The call for more women indicates that permanent settlement was increasingly viable. Winne mentions thirty-three people (including himself) living at Ferryland at this time, only seven of whom were women.

Yonge, James. Extract from "A Journal of All the Memorable Occurrances [sic] of my Life." Original manuscript in possession of the Plymouth Athenaeum, Plymouth, England. Published in F.N.L. Poynter (ed.), The Journal of James Yonge (1647-1721): Plymouth Surgeon. London: Longman, Green & Co. Ltd., 1963: 23-60. Revised by Peter E. Pope. Retrieved 24 August, 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/exploration/james-yonge-journal-extract-1663.php.

This excerpt from James Yonge's journal dates to 1663, when Yonge journeyed to Newfoundland for the fishing season. This text details the climate, landscape, and wildlife Yonge observed on the Avalon Peninsula, as well as detailed descriptions of the fishing industry, including descriptions of the work performed by boat and shore crews, the resources and personnel required, and the wages made by workers at different positions in the fishing hierarchy. Yonge's journal also provides valuable information about local planters, their daily lives, and how their routines differed during the winter months.

Secondary Sources

Books

Bannister, Jerry. *The Rule of the Admirals: Law, Custom, and Naval Government in Newfoundland, 1699-1832*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003.

Part of the wave of scholarship challenging Newfoundland's historiographic 'conflict' thesis, Jerry Bannister argues that contrary to the island's reputation for general 'lawlessness,' the legal system in Newfoundland functioned quite comparably to other Atlantic and North American colonies during the eighteenth century, incorporating naval governance, magistracy, local custom, and English common law. Bannister also partially deconstructs the 'black legend' of judicial abuse and corruption which permeates historiographic interpretations influenced by the conflict thesis, while acknowledging that the actions of naval governors and justices toward Irish fishing servants sometimes reflected an anti-Catholic fear of Irish rebellion and a prioritized mandate to defend property owners and employers in the various settlements.

Boyer, Paul A., and Stephen Nissenbaum. *Salem Possessed: The Social Origins of Witchcraft*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974.

Boyer and Nissenbaum seek to emphasize social factors in the development of the Salem witchcraft crisis of 1692. The authors point to strained community relations and factional rivalries which may have given notable impetus to the rampant suspicion, paranoia, and accusation which led to the infamous witch trials. This monograph is helpful in highlighting an example of the population saturation which made acquisition of decent land, or any land in New England, increasingly difficult as the colonial period progressed.

Bushman, Richard L. *The Refinement of America: Persons, Houses, Cities*. New York: Vintage Books, 1992.

Richard Bushman discusses and documents the rise of the gentility movement from the colonial world of the late seventeenth century to the early republican world of the nineteenth century. The author notes that prior to the late 1600s, the markers of gentility were solely the domain of the aristocracy, but following this date, the tendency toward the acquisition of social graces, refined objects, and more opulent living spaces

began to "trickle down" through social classes. By the nineteenth century, even a modestly middle-class home would follow certain architectural patterns and possess fine objects such as books, clocks, paintings, fine furniture, carpets, plate, and glassware. Bushman narrates a process whereby the great mass of people laid claim to the privileges and refinement of the aristocratic class whose influence they had thrown off during the Revolution. This monograph is useful for comparing the timeline of the author's thesis with similar developments in contemporaneous Newfoundland. Of course, only a handful of the wealthiest planters or town-based merchants could embrace the "genteel" way of life, but the broader laboring population were certainly regular consumers of luxury products in a proto-capitalist economy. Unlike their genteel counterparts, they preferred to spend their money on luxury consumables.

Cadigan, Sean. *Hope and Deception in Conception Bay: Merchant-Settler Relations in Newfoundland, 1785-1855*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995.

Cadigan's monograph challenges the widely accepted notion that merchants 'stunted' economic development in Newfoundland. Rather than "abusing" the credit system which planters depended on for their livelihood and sustenance, and purposely keeping them in debt, the "truck" system developed because of mutual interdependence between merchants and planters and their shared reliance on the fishery, the only resource capable of producing the kind of colonial success being achieved elsewhere in British North America. Further, Cadigan asserts that, rather than lobbying to prohibit agriculture which might interfere with their hegemony, merchants and imperial interests encouraged it. The lack of viable agriculture in Newfoundland is more a function of climate and geography than imperial or merchant domination. Moreover, merchants did not obstruct the development of wage labor in the fishery. The slow process of evolution toward family production was a function of falling prices or poor catches at specific times, meaning the capital to hire servants diminished, yet the practice remained. Finally, Cadigan argues that Newfoundland's ongoing economic difficulties partly arose from the failure of the island's liberal, nineteenth-century governors and political elites to reform the practices of the fishery and to make the industry central to their agendas. Instead, like their British North American counterparts, they sought economic diversification which Newfoundland did not, at that time, have the resource base to support.

Cell, Gillian T. *English Enterprise in Newfoundland: 1577-1660* (e-book). Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969.

Cell's monograph chronicles the beginnings and development of England's engagement in the Newfoundland fishery and the establishment in the region of some of the earliest English colonies in North America. The author emphasizes a few central themes: Newfoundland's economic and strategic importance in the context of an expanding England, and the struggle over dominance in Newfoundland between middle-class, West Country merchant interests and elite-backed settlement interests. This latter theme is at the heart of the 'conflict' thesis of Newfoundland historiography and has been much challenged since Cell's monograph was first published.

Cronon, William. *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1983.

One of the first works of 'environmental history,' Cronon constructs an historical narrative of the human-influenced changes to the ecology of New England and how the conditions of the natural environment influenced the region's societies both prior to and following the advent of Europeans. Cronon's monograph provides valuable context for how the English legal principle of "use" influenced notions of land ownership and entitlement, which strongly influenced the process of expansion and land acquisition in multiple colonies.

Davies, K.G., and Boyd C. Shafer, eds. *The North Atlantic World in the Seventeenth Century*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1974.

Davies constructs this broad survey work on the colonial activities of Europeans in seventeenth-century North America with focus on the English, French, and Dutch in the Caribbean and on the eastern seaboard. This monograph documents European experiences of exploration, plantation, exploitation of resources, as well as the outcomes of these activities. The authors follow a familiar narrative by which Europe sought to continue imposing her will on colonies that became ever more distinct from the Mother Country and ever more desirous of independence. But the authors also clearly demonstrate awareness of the mid-twentieth century historical paradigm which more clearly recognizes the impact on the environment and on indigenous peoples of North America. Davies also attempted to address the problem of assumed national borders in colonial historiography where none existed, attempting to give more attention to colonial Canada. Written before the advent of the "Atlanticist" perspective on colonial history, this monograph focuses mostly on what Europeans did in the colonies rather than the broad, complex web of social, political, and economic relationships linking all Atlantic-adjacent regions and peoples.

Diffie, Bailey W., George D. Winius, and Boyd C. Shafer, eds. *Foundations of the Portuguese Empire, 1415-1580*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1977.

This jointly-written monograph documents Portugal's naval, expansionist, and colonial development from the early fifteenth century to the late sixteenth century. Diffie and Winius' study stands in opposition to historical theories which posit medieval or early modern expeditions and discoveries predating those of the Portuguese, for which, they claim, there is little evidence, and which diminishes the undeniably important and innovative role Portugal played in leading western Europe into the Age of Sail, the age of discovery and expansion.

Deetz, James, and Patricia Scott Deetz. *The Times of Their Lives: Life, Love, and Death in Plymouth Colony*. New York: W.H. Freeman, 2000.

James and Patricia Deetz challenge the "Pilgrim Myth" with reference to Thanksgiving traditions and the Pilgrim reputation for excessive piety, social order, and austerity. The authors instead present a picture of a much earthier and more colorful

community of colonists than exists in popular cultural conceptions. Deetz and Deetz argue for the importance of both documentary and archaeological evidence in historical investigation, using both to construct a social history of Plymouth Colony which deviates significantly from the nineteenth-century historiographic construction of the Pilgrim Myth. The court records documenting legal proceedings for family conflicts, master-servant relations, drunkenness, and sexual crimes reveal a great deal about social relations and arrangements. Surviving probate inventories and archaeological finds shed light on material culture, subsistence practices, and architecture – all of which are useful for comparison with, and analysis of, other seventeenth-century colonies.

Demos, John. *A Little Commonwealth: Family Life in Plymouth Colony*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1970.

Building on the work on Edmund Morgan, John Demos sought to illuminate the inner workings of the family in seventeenth-century Plymouth and its relationship to the larger society of the colony. Using archaeological and documentary evidence, Demos constructs a picture of the physical households themselves, the activities that went on within them, the hierarchies and relationships among household members, and the details of their life cycles. Demos' monograph provides information on colonial experience valuable for comparison with contemporaneous colonies in Newfoundland including demographics, social arrangements and mores, and law.

Dunn, Richard S. *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624 – 1713*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972.

Dunn's seminal monograph explores and documents the development of English sugar colonies in the Caribbean, demonstrating sharp demographic, social, political, economic, and cultural differences between colonies in the Caribbean and those of the North American mainland. While his book predates the Atlantic perspective, Dunn seems to identify closely with its principles, at least as far as he acknowledges the close connections and interdependence between Caribbean and mainland colonies. Yet, the author is also clearly influenced by the nationalist historiographic trend which excludes coverage and analysis of English Atlantic colonies which today comprise the Canadian east coast. Dunn's coverage of the Caribbean however, departs from historiographic trends which have seen the English Caribbean disappear from colonial narratives, as Newfoundland continues to do, being mentioned in Dunn's work only twice, and in passing.

English, Christopher. *Essays in the History of Canadian Law: Two Islands, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005.

In this book, a series of essays examine the development of regional legal institutions in Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland both prior to and following Canadian Confederation. Attention is given to how law evolved within given conditions to affect settlement patterns, land use, land ownership, economic activities (crop production, cod fishery), marriage and divorce, inheritance practices, and the status of

women. Additionally, the essays provide a comprehensive picture of how the legal structures functioned in both regions.

Hatfield, April Lee. *Atlantic Virginia: Intercolonial Relations in the Seventeenth Century*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.

Atlantic Virginia documents intercolonial trade via Atlantic and overland routes, which not only facilitated economic development, but also the intercolonial mobility of people and information. Hatfield's work embodies the Atlantic perspective in that she emphasizes the interconnectedness and interdependence of the North American, Caribbean, European, and African regions within the Atlantic basin. Newfoundland neither appears on any colonial maps nor receives any mention in the text, despite being a pivotal hub of commerce, migration, and information in the Atlantic. However, Hatfield's conclusion does call for more regional studies to be written in the same vein to further flesh out the Atlantic perspective.

Kaufmann, Miranda. *Black Tudors: The Untold Story* (e-book). One World, 2017.

Challenging traditional English histories which do not acknowledge the presence of people of African descent in England until the early twentieth century, Miranda Kaufmann explores in detail the lives of twelve black residents of Britain as early as the 1500s. Using primarily employment and legal records, Kaufmann illustrates that hundreds of black people lived in diverse regions throughout early modern England. And rather than working as slaves, they instead emigrated to work in various fields. This monograph presents a fascinating look at early modern race relations and their very different shape prior to England's entry into the colonial slave trade. Its publication alongside others like it is also promising for the future of study of the early modern "black" Atlantic.

Keough, Willeen. *The Slender Thread: Irish Women on the Southern Avalon, 1750-1860* (e-book). New York: Columbia University Press, 2006.

Acknowledging that most of Newfoundland history has been male-centered history, Willeen Keough seeks to illuminate women's experiences in the Irish colonial settler community, particularly along the heavily "plebeian" or working-class southern Avalon, today known as the "Irish Loop." Rather than write a history emphasizing a separate women's culture, Keough seeks to ground women's experiences within the broader context of their families and community. The author demonstrates that despite the enduring presence of political, legal, and social discrimination against women, which was to be found virtually everywhere during the colonial period, Irish women on the southern Avalon nonetheless exercised significant freedom and authority at the local level. In Newfoundland, where almost every community was a semi-isolated outport and political and legal infrastructure fairly rudimentary, hegemonic forces on the island, particularly in far-away St. John's, were slow to intrude on the outport communities. Women's service to their communities, as equal economic contributors to the fishery, as healers and midwives, as tavern keepers, landlords, and matriarchs of large households,

ensured them of positions of notable honor and respect, both informally among their fellow settlers, and formally, in legal and business matters.

Krugler, John D. *English & Catholic: The Lords Baltimore in the Seventeenth Century*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004.

John Krugler documents the political, religious, and colonial activities of George Calvert and his son, Cecil Calvert, the first and second Lords Baltimore during the seventeenth century. Krugler seeks a middle ground between two historiographic extremes. The first assumes that the Calverts founded the colonies of Avalon and Maryland as a haven for persecuted Catholics. The second asserts that the Calverts sought only economic gains and cared far less about religious freedom than they claimed. Krugler argues that the Calverts' Catholicism was neither crippling to their careers in England, nor the sole reason for their colonial ventures. Further, he demonstrates that the Calverts' tendency toward religious toleration could be viewed both as an attempt to create a society which respected religious freedom, while also serving to attract more settlers for a more successful colony. The sections of the narrative dealing with religious life in Calvert's Avalon are useful for building the argument in favor of the unique religious liberty possessed at various times by Newfoundland colonists.

Pestana, Carla Gardina. *The English Atlantic in an Age of Revolution, 1640-1661*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Pestana's monograph identifies the English Revolution as the period during which Europe's colonial possessions in the Atlantic matured. Within two decades, colonies evolved from satellites of the mother country, peopled by the self-proclaimed subjects of the king, to communities notably distinct from the European societies they had departed, nurturing notions of self-determination and independence. The author emphasizes the interconnectedness of the colonies typical of the "Atlantic" perspective of colonial history, particularly regarding economics, but also political and religious ideology. A recent work, its colonial coverage is comprehensive, acknowledging and challenging the nationalist historiographic tradition of focus only on those regions that would become the "Thirteen Colonies." The regions which today comprise the Canadian Maritimes and Newfoundland are discussed, but mainly in the introductory and concluding pages and largely in a summative way. The principal explanation given for this is a lack of documentary evidence.

Pope, Peter. *Fish into Wine: The Newfoundland Plantation in the Seventeenth Century*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.

In one of the first truly comprehensive works of social history on early Newfoundland settlement, Peter Pope explores the development of Newfoundland "plantations" or colonies during the seventeenth century. Major themes include the facilitation of settlement by established economic interests in the fishery, the friction between settlement interests and commercial interests (with attention to the 'conflict' thesis), the development of Newfoundland as a crucial hub of transatlantic commerce and the emergence in Newfoundland of a notably modern consumer economy within

undeniably early modern economic arrangements. Pope's work challenges historiographic marginalization of Newfoundland in colonial works, both its exclusion from narratives and the notion of its colonies as too marginal, isolated, impermanent, underdeveloped, "poor," or "debauched" to be considered successful settlements.

Reeves, John. *History of the Government of the Island of Newfoundland* (1793). Prabhat Books, 2008.

Reeves' book features the first articulation of the conflict thesis, Newfoundland's dominant historical narrative which characterized the historiography of the region for nearly two centuries. Reeves argued that colonial Newfoundland was suffused by struggle between settlers and commercial, imperial interests whose goal was to impede the advancement of colonial settlement in order to maintain control of the island's resources for themselves.

Reid, John G. *Essays on Northeastern North America, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008.

Written and published at different times, Reid's collection of specially selected essays on northeastern North America - chiefly Acadia, Nova Scotia, and Maine – brings together discussions about the colonial, the imperial, and the aboriginal. Reid challenges several historiographic traditions in this work including the invisibility of both indigenous peoples and European settlers in these regions in traditional narratives of colonial history, and the linear and teleological narrative of "inevitable" expansion and violent conquest of indigenous land by settlers. Reid asserts, rather, that colonization failed far more often than it "succeeded" during the seventeenth century, and that colonial expansion was not necessarily desirable if not economically necessary, which it frequently was not. Rather than upholding the narrative of colonists continually expanding and displacing Native peoples, Reid emphasizes the settler's need to establish positive relationships with North America's indigenous peoples, the long-lasting and continued dominance of North America by native people throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the comparatively marginal status of European settlements for virtually the whole colonial period. Newfoundland is discussed in this comprehensive overview of northeastern North America but remains peripheral throughout despite the author's acknowledgment of the island's strategic, military, and economic importance for the colonial world.

Tannenbaum, Rebecca J. *The Healer's Calling: Women and Medicine in Early New England*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2002.

Tannenbaum's monograph explores the role of women in medical and health care in seventeenth-century New England. The author emphasizes women's function as front-line practitioners within their families and communities, as well as the influence and power they could exercise as practitioners. This book describes experiences of New England women which bear strong similarities to those of Newfoundland women of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century southern Avalon discussed by Willeen Keough in her work, *The Slender Thread*. This might lead one to suppose that the convention of healing

being chiefly the province of women, as well as one which gave them some status, might be a convention shared by other English colonies as well.

Taylor, Alan. *American Colonies: The Settling of North America*. New York: Penguin Books, 2001.

Taylor's monograph presents an expanded overview of North American history which challenges geographic, temporal, social, political, economic, and ethnographic aspects of traditional colonial historiography. Taylor widens the traditionally Anglocentric field of view to encompass New Spain, New Netherland, French Canada, and indigenous societies of the West. The encounters, relations, and cultural diffusion between Europeans, Africans, and Native Americans receive extended attention. Taylor also expands the temporal boundaries of his history immensely to encompass the period from 13,000 BCE to the early nineteenth century. *American Colonies* shows cognizance of the growing importance of an "Atlantic" perspective in North American colonial history, which emphasizes the economic connections and competition in which European imperialist powers, settlers, slaves, indigenous peoples, and merchants were all involved. This is a broad survey work like others which have been consulted for this thesis, in which most of northeastern North America, particularly Newfoundland, virtually disappears, being mentioned only nine times throughout the book, and only in a passing or summative way. It is interesting that Taylor dedicated a full section to French Canada in his book considering that the English Shore of Newfoundland alone had four times the population of New France and far more intercolonial interaction by the end of the seventeenth century.

"Vinland." In Ian Whyte, *Environmental History and Global Change: A Dictionary of Environmental History* (e-book). I.B. Tauris: 2013.

This reference entry gives a summary of the duration and scope of Norse settlement activity in Newfoundland between the eleventh and twelfth centuries CE.

Weaver, Jace. *The Red Atlantic: American Indigenes and the Making of the Modern World, 1000-1927*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014.

Historian Jace Weaver's monograph thoroughly embodies the Atlantic perspective and places indigenous Americans in the forefront of the colonial historical narrative. Rather than portrayed as passive receivers of European neighbors and culture or as the helpless victims of colonialism, *The Red Atlantic* instead highlights the very active role indigenous people played in the development of the modern American world. Particular attention is paid to the broad and rarely recognized mobility of indigenous Americans within the Atlantic basin, as well as how they helped to shape the politics, economics, and culture of modern American civilization.

Articles

Bannister, Jerry. "Whigs and Nationalists: The Legacy of Judge Prowse's 'History of Newfoundland.'" *Acadiensis* 32, no. 1 (Autumn 2002): 84-109.

Jerry Bannister documents the journey of D.W. Prowse's seminal historical work from "history" to "heritage." Probably the best known and most loved historical study in the popular consciousness of the province, Prowse's *History of Newfoundland* was instrumental in perpetuating and formalizing the 'conflict' thesis within Newfoundland historiography. Unchallenged until the 1970s, scholars now mostly reject this thesis, but it remains historical orthodoxy among much of the Newfoundland public, specifically because it emphasizes the Whiggish, nationalist concept of ongoing progress and improvement. Bannister further observes the tendency of the 'conflict' thesis to cast Newfoundlanders in the role of historical victims of imperialism and domination. This has led to a trend whereby Newfoundlanders continue to read continued victimization and oppression in subsequent challenges to their sovereignty and progress throughout the twentieth century. Despite numerous challenges by scholars and their general rejection of the 'conflict' thesis, most Newfoundlanders have absorbed a unifying cultural picture of themselves as honest, hardworking people continuously struggling toward a better future.

Barker, William. "Three Steps towards a History of the Book in Newfoundland." *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of Canada* 48, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 21-48.

Barker tracks the diffusion of books, literacy, and a growing emphasis on literary culture throughout Newfoundland's history. The article examines this development in three stages. The first spans the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and was characterized by widespread illiteracy and a preponderance of commercial and bureaucratic materials written in or about Newfoundland. No official publication took place on the island and any books would have been imported from Europe and would have belonged most likely to elites. The century and a half between 1800 and 1949 form the second period of development, marked by a rise in journalism, educational efforts, rising literacy, and expansion of local publication. The period from 1949 to the present, the post-Confederation period featured the growth of a much broader and institutionalized system of education and publication in which academics sought to define historical and literary identity in local and regional terms.

Best, Kelly. "Making Cool Things Hot Again: Blackface and Newfoundland Mummering." *Ethnologies* 30, No. 2 (Fall 2008): 215-48.

In this article, Kelly Best explores the problematic practice of face-darkening in Newfoundland's mummering traditions, which persisted into the late twentieth century. She traces its beginning popularity to the early nineteenth century and the advent of the popular Jim Crow character to early minstrel theater. Best observes that the practice of face-darkening might have meant different things at different times, alternately communicating a sense of white racial superiority, and at other times, perhaps, a sense of identification with laboring-class counterparts.

Blakemore, Richard J. "Pieces of Eight, Pieces of Eight: Seamen's Earnings and the Venture Economy of Early Modern Seafaring." *Economic History Review* 70, no. 4 (2017): 1153-1184.

Blakemore challenges the historical claim of early modern mariners as the "earliest example of a wage-earning proletariat." The proletarian label is misleading because the income of early modern mariners consisted of far more types of remuneration than simple wages. Blakemore demonstrates that sailors, especially in regions where labor was scarce or custom strong such as in the North Atlantic, had considerable bargaining power with ship's masters, regularly receiving additional remuneration besides wages as part of negotiated contracts, and that most mariners were also independent, small-scale merchants in the early modern venture economy. This paper provides firm evidence for the ability of Newfoundland fishermen, whose wages were structured similarly to mariners for the sake of labor competition, to become both small-scale capitalist venturers as well as consumers of the luxury products circulating the Atlantic.

CBC News. "Artist Highlights Slave Trade Connection in Bonavista Exhibition." Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. August 18, 2019. https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/camille-turner-nl-slave-ships-connection-1.5240589.

This article documents an artistic/gallery installation in Bonavista, Newfoundland in which the artist creates awareness of colonial Newfoundland's engagement with Atlantic slavery. Using references from Harvard's Transatlantic Slave Trade Database, Camille Turner documented at least nineteen slave ships which were built in Newfoundland between 1750 and 1800.

Crellin, J.K. "Early Settlements in Newfoundland and the Scourge of Scurvy." *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History* 17, no.1 (2000): 127-36.

Crellin's article discusses the documented efforts of Newfoundland settlers and migratory fishermen to treat and cure scurvy using both native plants and those imported from Europe and cultivated on the island. The author emphasizes the differences between the accumulation of medical knowledge in the Newfoundland colonies compared to those located further south and west, chief among which is the notable dearth of contact between Newfoundland's native Beothuk and the colonial settlers and migratory fisherman. Unable to learn from the Beothuk, experimentation and classification according to Galenic theory were most likely the primary means by which the first settlers organized medical treatments for scurvy. Crellin also emphasizes the questions still unanswered about medical treatments and practices in seventeenth-century colonial Newfoundland, including specific methods of preparation and administration.

Crompton, Amanda. "Confronting Marginality in the North Atlantic: Archaeological and Historical Perspectives from the French Colony of Plaisance Newfoundland." *Historical Archaeology* 49, no.3 (2015): 54-73.

Crompton challenges historiography and historical interpretations which characterize the seventeenth-century colonies of Newfoundland as geographically or economically marginal, underdeveloped, unsuccessful, and hopelessly dependent on profiteers who controlled the supplies of resources. With focus on the French colony of Plaisance, which the English colonists called Placentia, Crompton instead paints a picture of a profitable albeit small, healthy, self-sufficient, and well-defended colony for whose business several French merchants and merchant groups had to compete annually. The value implied by participation in the Newfoundland fishery is borne out by comparable success among fishermen and traders on the English Shore also.

den Boggende, Bert. "Raid on St. John's." *The Beaver: Exploring Canada's History* 83, no. 5 (Oct.-Nov. 2003): 22-5.

Bert den Boggende briefly narrates the Dutch raid on St. John's, Newfoundland in June 1665. The author notes that the Dutch, who were at war with the English, chose to harry the activities of the English at Newfoundland specifically because it promised to be least defended (unlike the Caribbean colonies or New York, recently seized by the English), and because of the lucrative economic activities taking place there from which the Dutch could profit through plunder. The author subscribes to the traditional historiographic notions of colonial marginality in seventeenth-century Newfoundland, describing its colonies as failed, and the colonists, in the words of the Dutch privateer, de Ruyter, "so poor" that it would be cruel to burn their settlement. Despite the relatively recent date of this article, the historiographic perspective is rather outdated and remaining unconsidered is the idea that de Ruyter's account might be interpreted as anti-English propaganda. It seems unlikely the Dutch would spend the time and money to raid St. John's if the settlement and inhabitants were actually too "poor" to make it worthwhile.

Dieulefet, Gaelle. "The Isle aux Morts Shipwreck: A Contribution to Seventeenth-Century Material Culture in Newfoundland." *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 33, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 136-71.

This article documents the archaeological discovery and inventory of artifacts from the Isle of Morts shipwreck, recovered at the mouth of Placentia Bay in Newfoundland, Canada. The artifacts found on board, including coins, textiles, ceramics, astrolabes, rope, and weaponry, shed much-needed light on the daily life and material culture of those who worked in the Basque migratory fishery in the Gulf of St. Lawrence and the west coast of Newfoundland, and at the Basque whaling stations on the eastern Labrador coast during the seventeenth century. The finds demonstrate the similarities between settlements established by different groups of Europeans around the island.

Featherstone, David. "Atlantic Networks, Antagonisms and the Formation of Subaltern Political Identities." *Social & Cultural Geography* 6, no. 3 (June 2005): 387-404.

David Featherstone explores 'subaltern' cultures in the early modern Atlantic, including slaves, masterless sailors, and Newfoundland fishing servants, and analyzes the images of these groups held by colonial and imperial authorities. Featherstone asserts that through the strategies of rebellion, mutiny, or desertion, these groups, which

constituted a highly mobile working class, could force changes they desired both within their own lives and the broader colonial world around them.

French, Noel E. "Dublin 1160-1200: Part One: Political Change and Continuity." *Dublin Historical Record* 68, no.1 (Spring/Summer, 2015): 21-35.

In this article, Noel French documents the development of institutional life in the city of Dublin, Ireland following the Anglo-Norman conquest of 1170. The author stresses that while political, economic, and ecclesiastical institutions evolved a great deal following the English invasion, he asserts that many of these changes were already underway by the early twelfth century when English investment in Ireland first began.

Gaulton, Barry C., and Tânia Manuel Casimiro. "Custom-Made Ceramics, Trans-Atlantic Business Partnerships and Entrepreneurial Spirit in Early Modern Newfoundland: An Examination of the SK Vessels from Ferryland." *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 19, no. 1 (March 2015): 1-20.

Gaulton and Casimiro explore the historical significance of recovered fragments of Lady Sara Kirke's personalized ceramic plates from the Avalon dig site in Ferryland, Newfoundland. The authors emphasize the insight into seventeenth-century international trading relationships which the vessel fragments provide, particularly the close economic links between Newfoundland and Portugal, but also Spain and France. Examination of the vessels also yields information about how they were used and their significance as symbols of status, wealth, and gentility during the seventeenth century.

Gilbert, William. "Ye Strength of Ye Place": Defence Works in the St. John's Narrows, 1638-1780." *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 25, no. 2 (Fall 2010): 197-216.

Gilbert's article seeks to map and clarify the fortifications first made on the English Shore of seventeenth-century Newfoundland in response to attacks by the Dutch and French, particularly the St. John's "Narrows." The increasingly effective defense of English harbors in Newfoundland meant that most subsequent successful attacks by the French before 1700 had to be launched overland from the Plaisance colony. The fortifications in the St. John's harbor were still protecting inhabitants as late as World War II. This article provides evidentiary support for the greater comparative safety in Newfoundland colonies, the conflicts being infrequent and increasingly difficult to launch as defenses improved during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Harris, Alison J.T., Ana T. Duggan, Stephanie Marciniak, Ingeborg Marshall, et al. "Dorset Pre-Inuit and Beothuk Foodways in Newfoundland, ca. AD 500-1829." *PLoS One* 14, no. 1 (Jan 2019): 1-25. Doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0210187.

Examination and analysis of faunal remains at confirmed Beothuk sites in Newfoundland show evidence of a pre-European contact diet for the Beothuk principally based on salmon from inland rivers and marine mammals such as harbor seals from coastal summer hunting grounds. The Dorset maintained a primary focus on harp seal hunting in more northerly parts of the island. Their descendants, the Inuit, would continue to maintain these foodways after their ancestors migrated north to Labrador.

Post-European contact sites show that Beothuk communities altered their foodways in response to European encroachment, showing a post-contact diet chiefly of caribou, which, while this does not preclude ongoing summer migration to coastal communities, does indicate that the Beothuk migrated much further west and north, likely to avoid their new neighbors.

Hiller, J.K. "Why Did Confederation Win? Or Why Did the Anti-Confederates Lose?" (1997). Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Website. Retrieved 8 September 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/politics/win-lose-confederation.php.

This brief article discusses reasons for the greater overall success of the Confederation campaign versus the anti-Confederation campaign in Newfoundland during the 1940s. Hiller asserts that those in favor of Confederation were much better organized and more importantly, had the support of both the British and Canadian governments. This article also features some interesting images of the Newfoundland flag being flown at half-mast to symbolize anti-Confederationist grief and mourning over the loss of responsible government and independence. These images remind one how close the vote on Confederation was, and that roughly half of the island's eligible voting population never got the chance to cast a ballot, most of whom were likely outport residents. Political history in Newfoundland has regularly been labeled the history of the elites and middle class of St. John's.

Higgins, Jenny. "Impacts of the Collapse of Responsible Government" (2007). Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Website. Retrieved 16 August 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/politics/collapse-responsible-government-impacts.php.

This article briefly narrates the process whereby political corruption, massive debt, economic collapse, and mass unemployment stimulated an abdication of responsible government in Newfoundland in 1934, and the assumption of a Commission of Government from Britain to help address the province's most pressing problems.

Hodgetts, Lisa M. "Feast or Famine? Seventeenth-Century English Colonial Diet at Ferryland, Newfoundland." *Historical Archaeology* 40, no. 4 (2006): 125-38.

Examination of both documentary evidence and faunal evidence from the archaeological record recovered from the Colony of Avalon dig site at Ferryland provide a reasonably clear picture of the seventeenth-century diet of colonists and migratory fishing crews. Pigs were the most significant dietary staple, supplemented by cattle, sheep and goats, caribou, and seal. A short growing season and thus a smaller yield of fodder kept domestic cattle herds small and preserved the necessity for regular importation of livestock from Europe or New England. The diet of colonists varied little across the century due to climactic limitations on the growing season and the temporal and economic demands of the cod fishery.

Holly Jr., Donald H. "A Historiography of an Ahistoricity: On the Beothuk Indians." *History and Anthropology* 14, no. 2 (2003): 127-140.

Holly challenges the historiographic and anthropological notion of the Beothuk as "timeless," "archaic," or culturally "anachronistic" and deconstructs the arguments which have traditionally been offered to support this view, including their supposed geographic isolation, their material culture and language which has been weakly interpreted as archaic, and the fact of their extinction which seemed to suggest that they were insufficient for survival in a new age. Holly demonstrates that the Beothuk were instead highly mobile and adaptable, with strong trading links with both indigenous and French groups around the Gulf of St. Lawrence and further west, in Canada. Further, their language and customs feature clear links with those of other First Nations peoples of northeastern North America. The traditional view of the Beothuk resembles the traditional historiographic approach to Newfoundland in colonial and other historical narratives, suggesting that Newfoundland's geography and climate provide weak support to the notion of the island's peoples and communities as 'marginal.'

Holly Jr., Donald H., Christopher Wolff, and John Erwin. "The Ties that Bind and Divide: Encounters with the Beothuk in Southeastern Newfoundland." *Journal of the North Atlantic* 3 (2010): 31-44.

The authors examine both historical and archaeological evidence to construct a picture of the few early encounters between Europeans and the Beothuk on the Avalon Peninsula during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. These encounters involved attempts to develop trade relationships, but also involved theft and scavenging of fishing settlements. Mounting hostility increased patterns of avoidance between the two groups. Increasing encroachment and aggression would lead to diminishing population numbers and the eventual extinction of the Beothuk in the nineteenth century.

Hughes, R. Elwyn. "The Rise and Fall of the "Antiscorbutics": Some Notes on the Traditional Cures for "Land Scurvy." *Medical History* 34, no. 1 (Jan 1990): 52-64. Retrieved 16 August, 2021. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1036000/?page=1.

Hughes discusses the standard seventeenth-century treatments for "land scurvy," believed at the time to be distinct from "sea scurvy" and requiring different treatment according to Galenic theory and contemporary wisdom. Hughes emphasizes the irony of the fact that the most standard and widely publicized treatments provided the lowest vitamin C content to be had in comparable herbs/plants, as well the fact that the "land scurvy" which many healers/physicians/surgeons believed they were treating may have been any number of other ailments.

Keough, Willeen. "Good Looks Don't Boil the Pot": Irish-Newfoundland Women as Fish (-Producing) Wives." *Signs* 37, no. 3 (Spring 2012): 536-544.

Keough discusses the importance of the economic roles played by women as part of the household production units of fishing families. The reduction in the number of migratory workers for hire in the fishery following the Napoleonic Wars brought women into paid employment *en masse* where previously, only a slowly increasing trickle of women had worked, specifically as fishing servants, as the growing demand for labor

remained unanswered. Women's contributions to their families, their ability to own property, and to earn a wage independently ensured women a fairly equitable status with their marital partners. Women's generalized importance to their communities ensured them of fairly equal treatment before the law and in commercial transactions. This image of hardworking, assertive, and strong Newfoundland womanhood continues to influence the island's culture today, and the paradigm continued to manifest among the working class while middle-class Newfoundland women were increasingly embracing domesticity during the nineteenth century.

Lounsbury, Ralph Greenlee. "Yankee Trade at Newfoundland." *The New England Quarterly* 3, no. 4 (Oct 1930): 607-26.

Lounsbury documents the close and lucrative economic relationship between New England and Newfoundland, cultivated often to the detriment of the mother country and her mercantilists, during the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. The author emphasizes the island's importance to the growth of the New England economy, but characterizes the relationship as exploitative of "poor," "debauched" Newfoundland fishermen. Many decades old, the article supports a few historiographic traditions. First, Lounsbury confirms what is known as the "conflict thesis" which posits a "retardation" of Newfoundland settlement due to clashes between fishing and settlement interests. Further, the author subscribes to the historiographic notion which cites Newfoundland's geographic and economic marginality to explain why the island's permanent settlements failed.

Lovelace, Martin. "Jack and His Masters: Real Worlds and Tale Worlds in Newfoundland Folktales." *Journal of Folklore Research* 38, no. ½ (Jan-Aug 2001): 149-178.

Martin Lovelace explores the Jack folktales of Newfoundland and concludes that they primarily served to instruct young men in important life lessons and values. These magical tales sought to inculcate in their young listeners a distinctly working-class culture, particularly helping them to navigate "master/servant" relationships in which they were at a near-permanent disadvantage. Additionally, the Jack stories demonstrate that colonial Newfoundland fishing families retained the cultural and oral traditions of their agricultural peasant forebears of West Country England and Southwest Ireland. The Jack folktales reveal much about culture and interactions in colonial Newfoundland, but particularly relationships, be they professional, personal, familial, or romantic.

Lyttleton, James. "The Manor Houses of the 1st Lord Baltimore in an English Atlantic World." *Post-Medieval Archaeology* 51, no. 1 (June 2017): 43-61.

James Lyttleton examines and compares the features of houses built for Sir George Calvert in his native Yorkshire, as well as in his colonial proprietorships in Ireland, Newfoundland, and Maryland. Archaeological and architectural evidence testifies to the differences between modes of settled life in all four locations in the seventeenth century. The mansion house at Ferryland is quite elaborate and impressive for its early date of construction in the colonial world, and the organization and expertise

characterizing the initial establishment of settlement by Captain Winne exemplifies the lessons learned from earlier, less successful colonial settlement ventures.

Matthews, Keith. "Historical Fence-Building: A Critique of the Historiography of Newfoundland" (1978). *Newfoundland Studies* 17, no. 2 (Fall 2001): 143-65.

One of the most important works of Newfoundland historiography, "Historical Fence Building" deconstructs the nearly two-hundred-year-old 'conflict thesis' which theorized that fierce competition between commercial and settled fishing interests impeded the process of settlement in Newfoundland until the mid-eighteenth century. Matthews asserted that past historians had simply accepted the thesis, which, he pointed out, did not stand up to the archival evidence he had collected and amassed for the archives at the Memorial University of Newfoundland. Matthews championed an inductive, evidence-based approach and concluded that despite competition and attempts by England's Privy Council and Board of Trade to limit settlement, efforts to do so were mostly ineffective, only occasionally enforced, and shortly abandoned. A generation of scholars has built upon Matthews' work, steadily deepening academic interest in a re-assessment of colonial Newfoundland.

Miller, Aaron F. (PhD Thesis) "Avalon and Maryland: A Comparative Historical Archaeology of the Seventeenth-Century New World Provinces of the Lords Baltimore (1621-1644)." Department of Archaeology: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2013.

Miller's thesis comparatively analyzes the early years of colonial establishment and development in Newfoundland and Maryland, both established by the Calvert family during the early seventeenth century. The author compares and contrasts the two colonies with reference to leadership, population characteristics, defensive works and strategies, economics, and architecture. Miller asserts that the two colonies represent a single strategy for colonial establishment on the part of the Calverts: to establish a lucrative, economically self-sufficient colony where Catholics could enjoy religious freedom. The establishment of settlement at Ferryland was informed by the mistakes made at Jamestown, Virginia, just as the establishment of Maryland was informed by mistakes made in Newfoundland.

Miller, Aaron F., John D. Krugler, Barry C. Gaulton, and James I. Lyttleton. "Over Shoes Over Boots: Lord Baltimore's final days in Ferryland, Newfoundland." *Journal of Early American History* 1 (2011): 1-16.

Miller, Krugler, Gaulton, and Lyttleton discuss and analyze a known but little-used primary source, a letter from Sir George Calvert to his friend Sir Thomas Wentworth. The source reveals much about Calvert's goals for colonial settlement, the setbacks he faced including weather, hostile French fishing competitors, pirates, and food shortages, and his state of mind at the time he made the decision to abandon his Colony of Avalon in Ferryland, Newfoundland in 1629. The authors highlight the similarities and connections between Calvert's two settlement ventures: Avalon, and later, Maryland.

Pope, Peter. "Modernization on Hold: The Traditional Character of the Newfoundland Cod Fishery in the Seventeenth Century." *International Journal of Maritime History* 15, no. 2 (2003): 233-64.

Peter Pope closely examines the inshore fishery of seventeenth-century Newfoundland with a view to illuminating the problematic assumption that its activities constituted the emergence of modern industrial capitalism. By analyzing both the mode of fish production and the remuneration given to fishermen, Pope concludes that while the fishery featured distinct markers of nascent capitalism, it still operated largely within an early modern framework, similar to that of seasonal husbandry or the "putting-out" system in late medieval and early modern Europe. Pope's analysis suggests a far more beneficial arrangement for highly mobile, propertyless Europeans than elsewhere in Europe or the New World, including higher wages, and opportunities for quicker advancement than other colonies.

Quarterly Population – Canada, Provinces and Territories, 1971-2021." Statistics Canada. Retrieved 20 August, 2021. https://stats.gov.nl.ca/Statistics/Topics/population/PDF/Quarterly_Pop_Prov.pdf.

This resource lists population figures for Canada's provinces and territories throughout the last fifty years, providing data related to population growth and migration trends.

Rollman, Rhea. "Newfoundland in the Black Imaginary." *The Independent*. September 9, 2016. https://theindependent.ca/news/newfoundland-in-the-black-imaginary/#.

Speaking to the Independent, historian Afua Cooper gives a preview of her keynote address which was given at the "New-Found-Lands" art show at the Eastern Edge Gallery in St. John's, Newfoundland. Cooper laments the lack of attention given to black history within the Newfoundland historical tradition and asserts that black slavery in Canada was far more common than traditional historiography implies. Further, Cooper identifies such study as key to addressing current structural inequalities and racist attitudes.

Rowley-Conwy, Peter. "Settlement Patterns of the Beothuk Indians of Newfoundland: A View from Away." *Canadian Journal of Archaeology* 14 (1990): 13-32.

Peter Rowley-Conwy discusses the seasonal residence and subsistence patterns of the Beothuk indigenous peoples of Newfoundland, particularly how these patterns were affected by the arrival of European fishermen, and later settlers, to the island. The period best understood spans the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Documentary sources written by contemporary Europeans and faunal evidence from various active archaeological sites around the island reveal that Beothuk peoples ceased spring and summer migrations to the east coast of the Avalon Peninsula as European presence expanded there during the early seventeenth century. Beothuk groups continued to maintain fall and winter residences within the heavily forested island interior but chose spring and summer residences far north and west of the English Shore. Europeans did

not begin to seriously encroach on Beothuk territory again until the mid to late eighteenth century.

Smellie, Sarah. "NL Minister says Red Indian Lake name 'not really acceptable,' new name forthcoming." 8 June 2021. *The Toronto Star*. Retrieved 16 August, 2021. https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2021/06/08/nl-minister-says-red-indian-lake-name-not-really-acceptable-new-name-forthcoming.html.

This short article discusses the controversy over the proposed re-naming of Red Indian Lake in Newfoundland, Canada. In advance of the return of the bodies of two Beothuk people, shipped to the University of Edinburgh nearly two centuries ago, indigenous leaders are asking that a name change accompany the re-interment of the indigenous people known as Demasduit and Nonosabasut to the Red Indian Lake area. This article demonstrates that indigenous history is still finding its voice in the mainstream historical dialogue of Newfoundland, but that progress is being made toward an incorporation of the stories of Newfoundland's First Nations peoples.

Sweeny, Robert C. H. "What Difference Does a Mode Make? A Comparison of Two Seventeenth-Century Colonies: Canada and Newfoundland." *The William and Mary Quarterly Third Series* 63, no. 2 (April 2006): 281-304.

Sweeny conducts a comparative analysis of Canada and Newfoundland during the seventeenth century, with reference to modes of production. The author characterizes French Canada as the last feudal society and Newfoundland, specifically the inshore fishery and related settlements, as the first capitalist society, elaborating that both are examples of the transition from feudalism to capitalism. According to Sweeny, the method of appropriation of the surplus produced by workers influenced social differentiation, legal conventions, gender relations, culture, and economic development in both colonies. Sweeny grounds the article within a historiographical perspective which acknowledges the 'conflict thesis' as the primary fallacy of Newfoundland history. He emphasizes instead the continued interdependence and resulting mutual benefit and growth of the West Country-backed migratory fishery, and the resident fishery. This should not suggest that conflict and competition did not occur, but not to the extent of "retarding" colonization. Rather, the continued growth and security of the migratory fishery relied on the custodianship of settlers, whose own success in selling dried cod was aided by the buying power of the migratory interests, as well "sack" ships, who sailed to Newfoundland simply to buy processed cod rather than catching and curing the fish themselves.

Tavenor, Joshua. "Imports to Newfoundland in the Late Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries." *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 26, no. 1 (Spring 2011): 75-85.

Tavenor analyzes the shipping records for imports in seventeenth-century Newfoundland, among which "provisions," primarily food, predominate, but after which, salt and alcohol closely follow. Several other products were imported with frequency but in much smaller amounts than the aforementioned three, including molasses, sugar, olive

oil, cork, and various luxurious, non-essential foodstuffs. Tavenor not only emphasizes Newfoundland's immense breadth of Atlantic trade, which connected the island to both northern and southern Europe, the Caribbean, New England, and the Chesapeake region, but also uses this point to challenge the historiographic notion of Newfoundland as little more than a "fishing outpost," which instead, he asserts, was a crucial and thoroughly integrated node of both the English economy and the broader Atlantic economy.

"The Signatories: Gorges" (pdf). Pilgrim Hall Museum, Plymouth, Massachusetts: 1-4. Retrieved 16 August, 2021. https://pilgrimhall.org/pdf/The_signatories_Gorges.pdf.

Prepared by staff at the Pilgrim Hall Museum, this document contains a brief biographical overview of the life of Ferdinando Gorges, with particular attention to his role in the establishment and settlement of New England.

Tye, Diane. ""Bread for the Road": Intersections of Food and Culture in Newfoundland and Labrador." *Newfoundland and Labrador Studies* 26, no. 2 (Fall 2011): 175-196.

In this article, Diane Tye explores the tremendous historical and cultural significance of bread to Newfoundland and Newfoundlanders. Not only was bread the staple food of colonial settlers, but was also used in many other varied ways, from medical poultices to a talisman for travelers. A significant portion of virtually every Newfoundland woman's day was taken up with breadmaking and learning to bake bread was a seminal moment in a young girl's life. Virtually every Newfoundlander can recall the smell and texture of their mother's or grandmother's bread and making one's own bread from scratch remains a treasured tradition, exemplified by the fact that the first commercial bakeries did not appear until the late nineteenth century and were not widely available across the island until the late 1950s.

Webb, Jeff A. "Collapse of Responsible Government, 1929-1934" (2001). Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Website. Retrieved 16 August 2021. https://www.heritage.nf.ca/articles/politics/collapse-responsible-government.php.

This article briefly narrates the process by which Newfoundlanders decided to vote for the dissolution of responsible government in 1934, largely because of economic exigencies arising from spiraling debts from World War I and the impact of the Great Depression on both jobs and the price of fish. Additionally, charges of corruption within the Dominion government reduced public confidence in the ability of elected politicians to address the issues Newfoundland was facing. This article helps explain the perpetuation of the conflict thesis within Newfoundland historiography and the provincial popular consciousness.

Webb, Jeff A. "Revisiting Fence Building: Keith Matthews and Newfoundland Historiography." *The Canadian Historical Review* 91, no. 2 (June 2010): 315-38.

Historian Jeff Webb discusses the immense importance to Newfoundland historiography of Keith Matthews seminal 1978 essay, "Historical Fence Building," and

Matthews' own importance as a contributor to the archive collections at the Memorial University of Newfoundland. Webb notes that while Matthews' paper remains one of the most important works on the historiography of Newfoundland and a necessary starting point for any history student, Webb cautions students against reading too deeply into Matthews' PhD thesis, which is widely credited with the first deconstruction of the 'conflict' thesis. Webb notes that Matthews' thesis differed significantly from his later, more influential paper in that he was still operating within the more traditional historiographic framework of Constitutionalist historians, to whom the conflict thesis remained an orthodoxy.