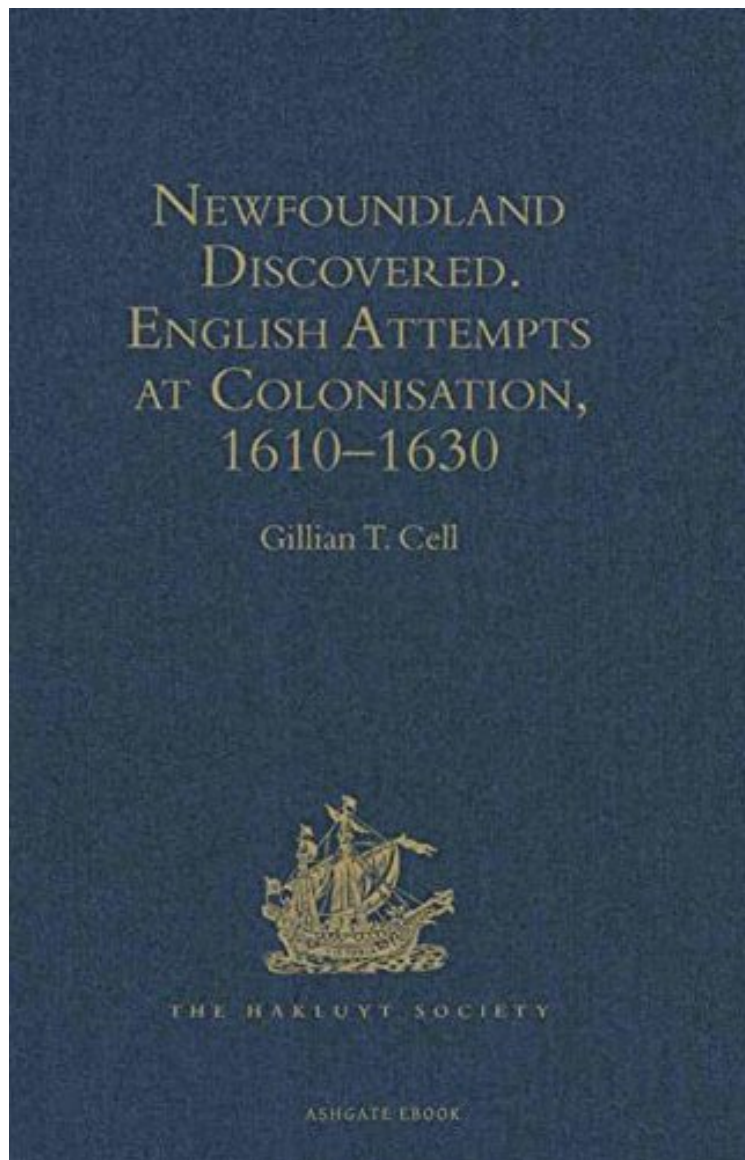


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Newfoundland Discovered: English Attempts at Colonisation, 1610-1630 (Hakluyt Society, Second Series)

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Despite the relative obscurity surrounding the earliest English settlements in Newfoundland, the documents in this volume show that they were neither unimportant, nor, ultimately, unsuccessful. Unlike the sites of other English colonies founded in the New World in the early 17th century, Newfoundland had an already-established economic base - the flourishing fishery for cod in which European fishermen had engaged for over a century. Settlement, from its beginnings in 1610, was closely tied to the exploitation of the fishery. But fishing was not the only occupation; the early settlers searched for iron and tried to grow food, to make glass and soap, and to establish a trade in furs with the indigenous Beothuk Indians. Keenly aware of their new and often hostile environment, the colonists recorded their impressions of the island's geography, climate, resources, and people, as well as their own struggle to survive. Some of their earliest letters are printed in this collection. In the third decade of the century, the first wave of settlers sent by the Newfoundland company were followed by a second despatched by independent proprietors: the Welshmen, William Vaughan, the courtier, Lord Baltimore, and the lord deputy of Ireland, Lord Falkland. Their correspondence and the writings of their publicists reveal not only their idiosyncratic reasons for involvement in Newfoundland, but also place the island and its fishery firmly in the context of their economic and strategic significance to England. In the works of Richard Whitbourne, reprinted here for the first time, are to be found the most complete statements of the value and practice of the fishery and the international trade in fish, together with vividly detailed descriptions of the island with which a lifetime connection had bred a loving obsession.

About the Author Gillian T. Cell