

SIR WILLIAM VAUGHAN'S CAMBRIOL - THE FIRST WELSH COLONY IN THE NEW WORLD

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Sir William Vaughan of Golden Grove, Carmarthenshire was a pioneering but little appreciated Newfoundland colonist in the early 17th century. The Sir William Vaughan Trust based in St. John's and Trepassey, Newfoundland is a Not for Profit corporation established in 2013 to shed light on Vaughan's New World venture which he named "Cambriol", Latin for Wales.

The Trust has conducted documentary research on both sides of the Atlantic and professional archaeological digs in the Trepassey area searching for evidence of Vaughan's Cambriol.

Our digs have already produced pottery evidencing a 17th and 18th century trade linking Trepassey to Italy, Spain, Germany, North Devon, the English Midlands and to Wales.

The Trust's 2017 dig on Trepassey's Lower Coast produced the distinctive black glaze on red paste pottery from Buckley, North Wales dating from 1720 to 1775 which importantly demonstrates a continuing Welsh – Newfoundland connection some 100 years after Vaughan.



Pottery from Buckley, North Wales (1720 – 1775)

Indeed, the pioneering Welsh role seems still reflected in the large number of Welsh family names in Newfoundland today.

But here's the rub - we have reached a point in our research when funds considerably in excess of our resources will be needed to finance the task at hand.

The ad below is our call for support from the wider New World Welsh diaspora.

Here is our case.

By the close of the 16th century, Welsh merchants and seafarers, directly and through Bristol, were trading into Newfoundland, bringing back salt cod and forest products (from logs to fir seedlings). During the early 17th century, Welsh Captains Thomas Button and Thomas James were exploring the eastern Arctic north of Newfoundland searching for a way to China.

And in 1616, in the most impressive early Welsh New World venture, Sir William Vaughan acquired a block nearly quarter the size of Wales on Newfoundland's Avalon Peninsula for his Cambriol Colony - sending over an unknown number of Welsh families until he was dispossessed by Charles I in 1637.

Long dismissed as a "failure", Sir William's Cambriol can now be seen as part of the continuous and prominent role that the Welsh played in 17th Century Newfoundland at a time when that "fishing station" was central to the creation of the British Empire.

A graduate of Jesus College Oxford (and of Vienna Law Faculty), Vaughan profusely on religion, philosophy, law, agricultural innovation, medicine (including a medical guide for Cambriol settlers) and Welsh rural social conditions. He had many contacts amongst westward looking explorers and investors. Yet literally none of his personal papers are “known to exist”.

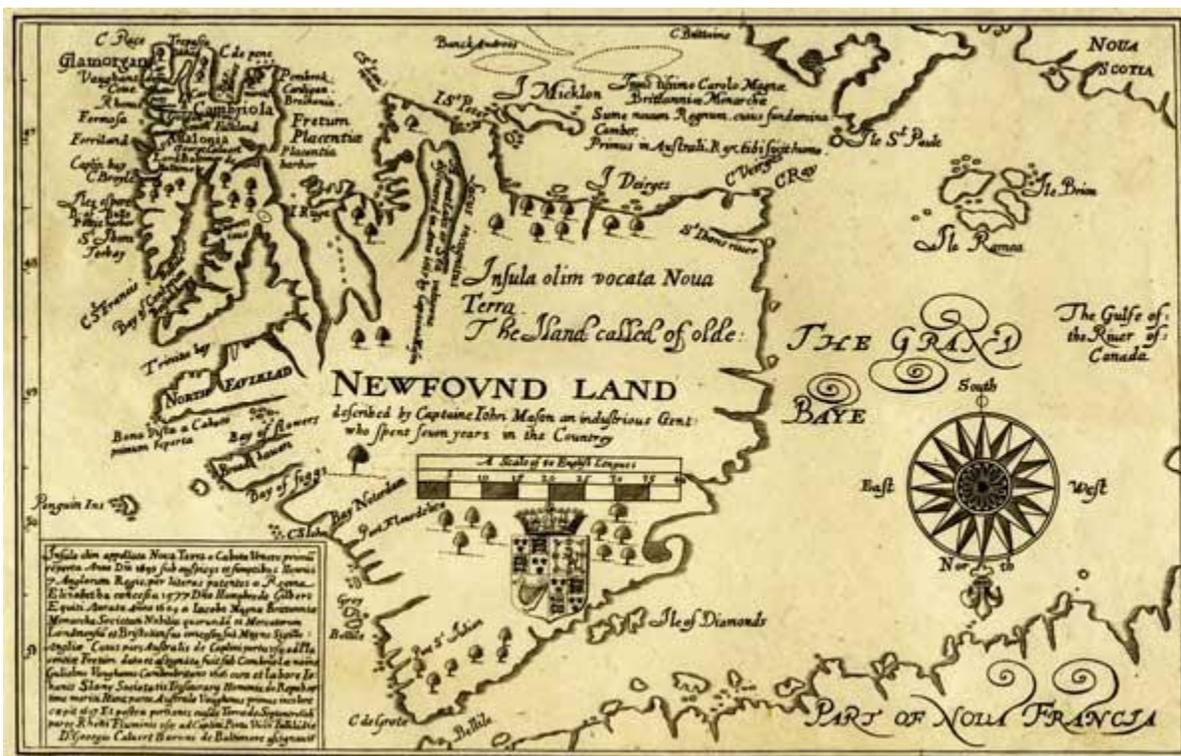
Recently, respected English historian Lizzie Cunningham tracked the evolution of the British Empire through the lens of food production in her captivating “The Taste of Empire” (Basic Books). In it, she exposed the fishy roots of English wealth by detailing Newfoundland’s role noting “The importance of the Newfoundland fish trade in laying the foundations of the British Empire is frequently overlooked.” Most history, as written, reflects that forgetfulness.

So keen scholarship will be required to track Sir William - a forgotten man from a forgotten era.

But surely this is a fascinating subject and of interest to “New World” specialists in history, archaeology and geography.

A Trust project initiated in the fall of 2018 shows the potential for uncovering “new” Vaughan material.

Of all of Vaughan’s works, the most intriguing may be his *Cambrensiūm Caroleia* published in 1625 in honour of the marriage of Charles I to Henrietta Maria of France. It also contains the first known copy of Captain John Mason’s pioneering map of Newfoundland on which the Cambriol portion is endowed with South Wales place names.



Captain John Mason’s map 1625 – First English map of Newfoundland , Cambriol at upper left

On Mason's map, Trepassey is marked as "Colchos" - the home of a "Golden Fleece" in vast schools of cod - or as Vaughan called them - "Neptune's sheep".

Framed as a 70 page poem, alternately lavishing praise on the King and Queen and then on the virtues of Cambriol, it is slick propaganda. It is a work often listed - but likely very seldom read - as it was published in *Latin* and an English translation is apparently unavailable.

But not for long, as the Classics Department at Memorial University in St. John's, Newfoundland, aided by a small grant from the Sir William Vaughan Trust, has a team at work translating this Early Modern gem.

Further projects will focus on identified highly prospective archives in Wales and England and the many archaeological sites on the Lower Coast and other areas of Trepassey Harbour that deserve digs.

We need your support to continue this work. Please read our ad and visit our GoFundMe site www.GoFundMe.com/WelshNewfoundland

Diolch.

Diolch yn fawr iawn.