

THE MISTS OF TIME: What happened to William Vaughan?

by

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Introduction

Modern scholars and researchers find it inexplicable that so little remains of the worldly presence of Sir William Vaughan (1577-1642), of his time a prolific writer with published books in many editions. He provided quality knowledge of scurvy and its cure; set the standard for herbal medicines and their use and yet these things, while accepted at the time as being wonderful, apparently quickly faded after his passing. His praise of Newfoundland and its colonial potential was, along with Whitbourne, Eburne and others, one of the seminal treatises on Newfoundland geography and natural history which, in its basic facts, still stands some of the tests of time.

There are a few minor references extant, to be sure. His name and arms on a scroll of Carmarthenshire worthies; his wife's tomb and memorial; and a lingering presence in Newfoundland settlement history, oft repeated and oft distorted. Curiously, this is not a function of just the 20th or 21st century; Prowse in the 19th apparently glossed Vaughan to suit his own historical purpose and, as will be seen below, a late 17th century and an early 18th century references to Vaughan are also of dubious accuracy.

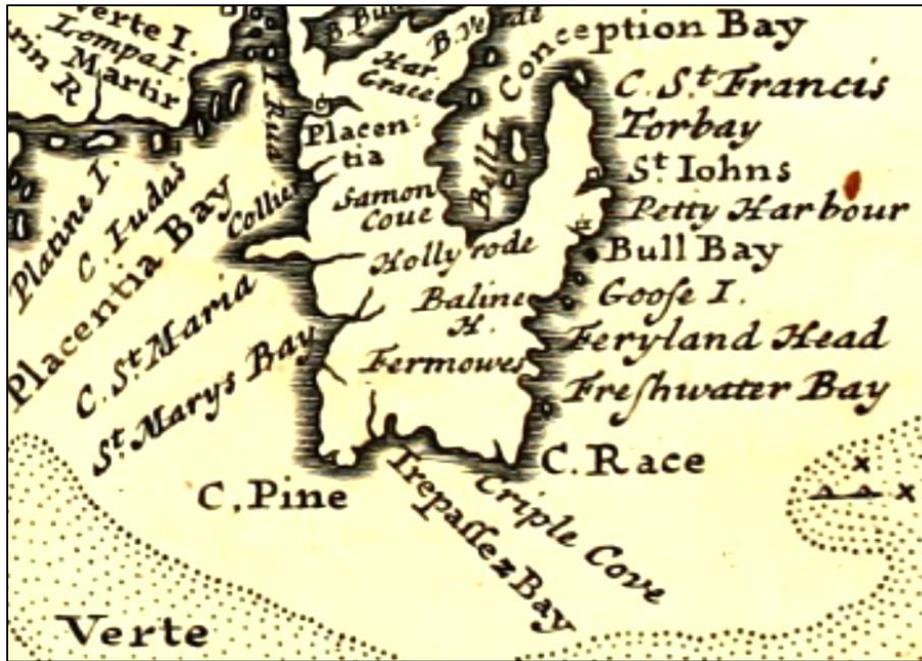
In private conversation, one Vaughan researcher said, "It is almost like Vaughan wanted to be NOT remembered" which is borne out by his insistence on an unmarked grave. He was popularly suspected of complicity in the death of his first wife, an heiress from whom he gained his farm and home near Carmarthen, so much so a decade later he published a book on slander and libel. For his times his publishing record is amazing and unique.

A lawyer, physician, writer, colonial entrepreneur, academic, intellectual and scholar, Vaughan was the second son (which means he had nothing from his father Walter's estate) and had to "make his own way". His wife's death from being struck by lightning deeply affected him and he adopted a spiritual and religious view of everything; his writings borrow equally from the classic Greek philosophers and the Christian canons.

An interesting early reference to Vaughan is provided by John Oldmixon in his *The British Empire in America* published in 1741. Oldmixon borrows from Anthony Wood's *Athenae Oxonienses* (1690-91; 1721) for some biographical information. Biographies of Oldmixon and Wood from Wikipedia are included in References and sources. What is telling is the already inaccuracies surrounding Vaughn barely 60 years (Wood) to 100 years (Oldmixon) after his death.

The History of Newfoundland Containing An Account of its Discovery, Settlement, Encrease, Inhabitants, Climate Soil, Product, Trade and present State (27 pages). In, *The British Empire in America containing The History of the Discovery, Settlement, Progress and State of the British Colonies on the Continent and Islands of America*. Vol. I. by John Oldmixon, 1741.

Avalon Peninsula maps from 1626 and 1741



Extract from A New Map of NEWFOUNDLAND, NEW SCOTLAND The Isles of Breton, Anticosti, St. John's &c. Together with the Fishing Bancks. By H. Moll Geographer (above; included in Oldmixon) and extract from Mason's Map, as published in *The Golden Fleece* by William Vaughan in 1626 (below; rotated to north up orientation).



Oldmixon's *The History of Newfoundland* starts with Moll's map of the Island, possibly made for the publication and one of several in the book. In the extracts are many inaccuracies. Moll and Mason (1626) both put Cape Pine (Mason calls it C. de Pene) west of Trepassey Bay but Mason appears to have it at Cape St. Mary's. Mason has St. Mary's Bay large and wide whereas Moll minimizes it but does have C. St. Maria in the correct location. Trepassey Bay in Mason is geographically correct and almost to scale but Moll doesn't even come close. Moll's other problems include missing Renewes and Fermeuse; including a Goose I. in the Witless Bay-Tor's Cove archipelago, the largest of which are Gull Island and Great Island; and including *Collier* south of Placentia Bay (if meant to be Colliers of Conception Bay). Mason's Isle Ruge and Moll's I. Rud are apparently Red Island which was apparently well known by 1600.

Other Moll Placentia Bay names bear scrutiny, Verte I., Lompa I. (both unknown) and Martir (Mortier) are north of Burin R. Platine I. (Flat Island) and C. Iudas [Judas] (Jude Island) are not present on Mason indicating the newness (since 1713) of the whole of Placentia Bay to English interests. In Fortune Bay, Fontalony may be Jacques Fontaine.

The History

Oldmixon claimed in Introduction:

All the Account of its Trade and present State was communicated to him [Oldmixon in the third person] by one who dwelt there as a Merchant [unnamed] several Years. What has been added to this Edition has been taken from publick Memoirs, and consequently are the most authentick.

He made Sebastian Cabot the discoverer of Newfoundland which thereby refuted any French or Biscayan claim to Newfoundland. Oldmixon said English trade to Newfoundland started shortly after its 1497 discovery. The cannibalism portrayed below may be apocryphal and intended to depict just how strenuous survival in the New World once was.

Mr. Thorn and Mr. Elliot, two Adventurers of our Nation, traded here, and one Mr. Hore attempted a settlement here, the first of its kind by Europeans in North America, but was reduced to such Streights, that many of his Company were killed and eaten by their Fellows. Those who surviv'd were so changed, that Sir William Butts of Norfolk did not know his Son at his return ...

Butts (1486-1545) was a founder of the College of Physicians in London and a personal physician to Henry VIII. Butts' son couldn't have been a worthy character, Oldmixon concluded, to have been

sent or permitted to go on such a desperate adventure, in so barbarous and desolate a Country as Newfoundland.

The events took place about 1542. The English then abandoned Newfoundland, Oldmixon said, until Gilbert took possession in 1583. He put Richard Whitbourne, in command of an unnamed ship of 250 tons [extremely large for the times] out of Southampton, at the ceremony.

In the Year 1615, Dr. William Vaughan of Carmarthen, purchas'd a Grant of the Patentees for part of the Country, as well to the South, as to the East, which shews us that the French had no Right or Title to it. Dr. Vaughan was the son of Sir Walter Vaughan, of Golden Grove, younger son to Sir John Vaughan, the first Earl of Carberry. [how can things have gone so far off track in a mere century; William was John's brother and Walter's second son] The Doctor was a poet as well as a Physician, and Author of several Writings in Verse and Prose.

A. Wood is quoted as to Vaughan's colony being called "Cambriola, Little Wales, now call'd by some Britanniola, Little Britain".

Vaughan studied and wrote in Newfoundland in 1626 and 1628, according to Wood, Vaughan having governed his plantation by deputies until then. Oldmixon made no further mention of Vaughan until the arrival of Calvert.

It is probably these two Gentlemen, Sir George Calvert and Dr. Vaughan, both of Oxford, Calvert of Trinity, and Vaughan of Jesus, the Welsh College, were Inhabitants of this Island as the same time.

Calvert "procur'd one [Patent] for that Part of the Island which lies between the Bay of Bulls, in the east, and Cape St. Mary's in the South, which was erected into a Province, and called Avalon, as before mention'd." Oldmixon included all of Vaughan's patent in Calvert's permit, again a position not now commonly held. He went on to say, in effect, there is no record of this deal:

How this Grant cou'd be made without the Consent of the former Proprietors, [the Newfoundland Company] we cannot comprehend, for he settled himself within their limits, and he either agrees with them for it, or King James invaded the Company's Property [something that did take place in 1637 when by Royal decree all Newfoundland plantation grants were forfeited to the Crown and passed to Kirke.

Oldmixon wasn't aware of transfers or purchases between Vaughan and Calvert, the current thinking, perhaps because such records had already disappeared from the public record, if they ever existed. Others have mentioned the loss of Court records in the late 17th century fires that ravaged London. He described the now well known facts of Calvert's tenure at Ferryland.

Relating the efforts of Edward Wynn at Ferryland and Daniel Powell at Caplin Bay, on Calvert's behalf, he wrote,

These two Adventurers, Capt. Wynn and Capt. Powell, being Welshmen, one may suppose they were the more ready to visit this Land on Account of their Countryman Dr. Vaughan, whose settlement must have gone on after Whitburn's Voyage, if, as Mr. Wood writes, he himself resided here, and was here living in 1628.

Faulkland attempted a failed colony under Francis Tansfield in 1623, according to Oldmixon.

Sir George Calvert, made Lord Baltimore, was so well satisfied with the Account given him of his Plantation of Avalon, that he removed thither with his Family, built a fine house and strong Fort at Ferryland, and dwelt there several Years; as did Dr. Vaughan, on the other Side of the Island. The Bristol Plantation was in being still, and Conception, Trinity, St. John's, Cape de Raz and other Stages were every Year frequented by great Numbers of English Adventurers in the Fishing Trade.

He recounted the Kirke-Calvert dispute, in summary, the English use of Newfoundland's east coast is detailed, noting English use did not extend past Cape Bonavista until late in the 17th century with the settling of Greenspond.

On that which was the French Side [i.e., French use] are the Bays of Trepasey, St. Mary's, Borrell and Placentia, which extend their Arms towards the North or opposite Coast.

"The other side of the Island" and the note about Trepassey Bay being on "the French side" indicates Oldmixon wasn't particularly aware of Vaughan's plantation locations now known to be at Renew's (1617) and Trepassey Harbour (after 1624). The location of *Borrell* [it is a common Spanish surname] isn't clear, for if it is meant to sit between St. Mary's and Placentia Bay either it doesn't exist or it must be Holyrood Bay (now St. Vincent's and St. Stephen's); the name did not survive.

Starting at Cape Race and going north, he listed places and the number of houses and families, although he missed everything south of Ferryland. Bay Bulls is out of sequence; Brigas Bay and Bells Inn may refer to Brigus South and LaManche [or Caplin Cove, now Burnt Cove] as they are south of Toads [Tors] Cove and Mummable [Mobile] Bay. Witless Bay isn't mentioned. Also interesting is that Cape Broyle, Ferryland and Bay Bulls (with 62) outnumber St. John's and Brigas, Mummable and Petty Harbour are equals at six. In other studies, Mobile had a fairly stable population for a century from 1835, at just under 200 and it was noted in the 1921 nominal census as primarily an agricultural community, its farming economy much larger than its fish production.

Oldmixon's tally of Avalon houses and families

Ferryland	30	Kittavitty	20
Cape Broil	12	Torbay	4
Bay of Bulls	20	Holyrood*	
Brigas Bay	6	Salmon Cove*	12*
Bells Inn	3	Havre de Grace*	
Toads Cove	2	Carbonear	30
Mummable Bay	6		*12 (unclear if
Petty Harbour	6		these three are
St. John's Town	60		totalled or have
			12 each)

Oldmixon blamed bad winter weather for putting an end to most settlement enterprises. The early Discourses praising Newfoundland's wondrous benefits, he decried.

All which being intirely false, shews us that the first Patentees and Adventurers to America play'd the Cheat to draw in Purchasers and Partners, as our Jobbers do to raise Stocks and increase the Numbers of Bubbles; for 'tis obvious that most of the Patentees got in only to sell out; but the Market was too far off for them to make a Hand of it. Mr. Guy and Capt. Whitburn were, as we may perceive, willing the Island should be inhabited, by the fair Description they gave of it; for 'tis in Truth one of the most uncomfortable Places in the habitable World.

Oldmixon's Newfoundland history concluded with a description of French-English hostilities of the late 17th century and the depredations conducted on the English Shore leading to the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713.

His biographical references to Vaughan come from Anthony Wood, *Athenae Oxonienses* (1690-91;1721) 1:528 (repeated here in its entirety).

SIR WILLIAM VAUGHAN, Son of Walt. Vaughan of the Golden Grove in Caermarthenshire Esq; and younger Brother to Sir John Vaughan the first Earl of Carbury, was born at the Golden Grove, became a Commoner of Jesus Coll. in Mich. Term, an. 1591, age 14, took the degrees in Arts, and entred on the Law Line, but before he took a degree in that Faculty, he went to travel, an performing some exercize in order thereunto in Vienna, did proceed Doctor there, and at his return was incorporated at Oxon in the same Faculty, an. 1605. In which, tho' indifferently learned, yet he went beyond most Men of his time for Latin especially, and English, Poetry. Afterwards spending much time in rambling to and fro, did take a long journey for the honour and benefit of his Nation, and became the chief undertaker for the Plantation in Cambriol, the Southernmost part in Newfound-land, now called by some Britanniola, where with pen, purse, and Person did prove the worthiness of that enterprize. He hath written,

Pium, continens canticum canticorum Solomonis, & Psalmos aliquot selectiores, una cum quibusdam aliis poematis e Sacrae Scripturae fontibus petitis. Lond. 1597. oct.

Elegia gratulatoria in honorem illustriss. Herois Caroli Howard Comitis Nottingham. 23. Oct. 1597. meritiss. creati. Printed with the former.

Varia Poemata de Sphaerarum ordine, &c. Lond. 1589. oct.

Poemata continent. Encom. Roberti Comitis Essex. Lond. 1598. oct.

The Golden Grove moralized, in 3 Books. A work very necessary for all such, as would know how to govern themselves, their houses, or their country. Lond. 1600. and 1608. oct. This Book which is written in prose, was commended to the World by some Poets, or at least pretenders to Poetry, then (1600.) living in the University, as Dr. Joh. Williams Marg. Professor, Will. Osbourne one of the Proctors, Hen. Price Bac. of Div. of S. John's Coll. Griffin Powel of Jesus, Joh. Budden LL.D. Nich. Langford and Tho. Came Masters of Arts, Gabr. Powel B.A. Sam. Powel, Tho. Storer, and Jo. Rawlinson Masters of Arts, Charles Fitzgeffry of Broadgates, Tho. Michelbourne, &c.

The Golden Fleece, divided into three parts; under which are discovered the errors of Religion, the vices and decays of the Kingdom, &c. Lond. 1626. qu. in prose. Transported from Cambriol. Colchos out of the Southernmost part of the Island call'd New-found-land by Orpheus jun. alias Will. Vaughan. There is no doubt but this our ingenious Author hath other things extant, but such, tho' with great scrutiny, I cannot yet discover: nor can I find any thing else relating to the Author only that he was living at Cambriol before-mentioned in sixteen hundred twenty and eight. I find one Will. Vaughan, a physician, who among several other things hath published a book, entit. Directions for Health, natural and artificial, derived from the best Physicians, as well modern as ancient, &c. Printed several times, as in 1617. oct. Lond. 1626. qu. the sixth edit. and there again 1633. &c. Another book also he wrote called The Newlanders Cure, with Rules against the Scurvey, Caught, &c. Printed 1639. oct. &c. Whether this physician was originally of Oxon. I cannot tell, notwithstanding we have had several of both his names and time.

References and sources

Oldmixon:

<http://archive.org/stream/britishempireina01oldm#page/n59/mode/2up>

Wood:

<http://spenserians.cath.vt.edu/BiographyRecord.php?action=GET&bioid=33020>

Taken from Wikipedia:

John Oldmixon (1673 – July 9, 1742) was an English historian.

He was a son of John Oldmixon of Oldmixon, Weston-super-Mare in Somerset. He was brought up by the family of Admiral Robert Blake in Bridgwater and later became involved in trade through the port of Bristol.

His first writings were poetry and dramas, among them being *Amores Britannici*; *Epistles historical and gallant* (1703); and a tragedy, *The Governor of Cyprus*. His earliest historical work was *The British Empire in America* (1708), followed by *The Secret History of Europe* (1712-1715); *Arcana Gallica, or the Secret History of France for the last Century* (1714); and other smaller writings.

More important, although very biased, are Oldmixon's works on English history. His *Critical history of England* (1724-1726) contains attacks on Edward Hyde, 1st Earl of Clarendon and a defence of Bishop Gilbert Burnet, and its publication led to a controversy between Dr. Zachary Grey and the author, who replied to Grey in his *Clarendon and Whitlock compared* (1727). On the same lines he wrote his *History of England during the Reigns of the Royal House of Stuart* (1730). Herein he charged Francis Atterbury and other editors with tampering with the text of the *History*. From his exile Atterbury replied to this charge in a *Vindication*, and although Oldmixon continued the controversy it is practically certain that he was in the wrong.

He completed a continuous history of England by writing the *History of England during the Reigns of William and Mary, Anne and George I* (1735); and the *History of England during the Reigns of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary and Elizabeth* (1739). Among his other writings are, *Memoirs of North Britain* (1715),

Essay on Criticism (1728) and *Memoirs of the Press 1710-1740* (1742), which was only published after his death. Oldmixon had much to do with editing two periodicals, *The Muses Mercury* and *The Medley*, and he often complained that his services were overlooked by the government.

Taken from Wikipedia:

Anthony Wood or Anthony à Wood (17 December 1632 – 28 November 1695) was an English antiquary. [He] was the fourth son of Thomas Wood (1580–1643), BCL of Oxford, where Anthony was born. He was sent to New College School in 1641, and at the age of twelve was removed to the free Lord Williams's School at Thame, where his studies were interrupted by Civil War skirmishes. He was then placed under the tuition of his brother Edward (1627–1655), of Trinity College, and, as he tells us, 'while he continued in this condition his mother would alwaies be soliciting him to be an apprentice which he could never endure to heare of.' He was entered at Merton College in 1647, and made postmaster.

In 1652 he took up ploughing and bell-ringing. 'Having had from his most tender years an extraordinary ravishing delight in music,' he began to teach himself the violin and took his BA examinations. He engaged a music-master and obtained permission to use the Bodleian, "which he took to be the happiness of his life." He received the MA degree in 1655, and in the following year published a volume of sermons by his late brother Edward.

Wood began systematically to copy monumental inscriptions and to search for antiquities in the city and neighbourhood. He went through the Christ Church registers, "at this time being resolved to set himself to the study of antiquities." Dr. John Wallis, the keeper, allowed him free access to the university registers in 1660; "here he layd the foundation of that book which was fourteen years afterwards published, viz. *Hist. et Antiq. Univ. Oxon.*" He also came to know the Oxford collections of Brian Twyne to which he was greatly indebted. He steadily investigated the muniments of all the colleges, and in 1667 made his first journey to London, where he visited William Dugdale, who introduced him into the Cottonian Library, and William Prynne showed him the same civility for the Tower records.

On 22 October 1669, he was sent for by the delegates of the press, "that whereas he had taken a great deal of paines in writing the *Hist. and Antiq. of the Universitie of Oxon*, they would for his paines give him an 100 li. for his copie, conditionally, that he would suffer the book to be translated into Latine." He accepted the offer and set to work to prepare his English manuscript for the translators, Richard Peers and Richard Reeve, both appointed by Dr. Fell, Dean of Christ Church, who undertook the expense of printing. In 1674 appeared *Historia, et antiquitates Universitatis Oxoniensis*, handsomely reprinted "e *Theatro Sheldoniano*" in two folio volumes, the first devoted to the university in general and the second to the colleges. Copies were widely distributed, and university and author received much praise. On the other hand, Bishop Barlow told a correspondent that "not only the Latine but the history itself is in many things ridiculously false" (*Genuine Remains*, 1693, p. 183).

In 1678 the university registers which had been in Wood's custody for eighteen years were removed, as it was feared that he would be implicated in the Popish Plot. To relieve himself from suspicion he took the Oath of Supremacy. During this time he had been gradually completing his great work, which was produced by a London publisher in 1691-1692, 2 vols. folio, *Athenae Oxonienses: an Exact History of all the Writers and Bishops who have had their Education in the University of Oxford from 1500 to 1690*, to which are added the *Fasti*, or *Annals* for the said time. Wood contemplated publishing a third volume of the *Athenae*, printed in the Netherlands. The third appeared subsequently as "a new edition, with additions, and a continuation by Philip Bliss" (1813–1820, 4 vols. 4to). The Ecclesiastical History Society

proposed to bring out a fourth edition, which stopped at the Life, ed. by Bliss (1848, 8vo; see Cent. Mag., N.S., xxix. 135, 268). Bliss's interleaved copy is in the Bodleian.

On 29 July 1693 Wood was condemned and fined in the vice-chancellor's court for certain libels against the late Edward Hyde, 1st Earl of Clarendon. He was punished by being banished from the university until recanting, and the offending pages burnt. The proceedings were printed in a volume of Miscellanies published by Edmund Curll in 1714. Wood was attacked by Bishop Burnet in A letter to the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry (1693), and defended by his nephew Dr Thomas Wood, in a Vindication of the Historiographer, to which is added the Historiographer's Answer (1693), reproduced in the subsequent editions of the Athenae. The nephew also defended his uncle in An Appendix to the Life of Bishop Seth Ward, 1697. After a short illness Anthony Wood died, and was buried in the outer chapel of St John Baptist (Merton College), in Oxford, where he had superintended the digging of his own grave only a few days before.

He received no recognition from the university he had worked for his whole life. He never married, and led a life entirely devoted to antiquarian research. He was always suspected of being a Roman Catholic, and invariably treated Jacobites and Papists better than Dissenters in the Athenae, but he died in communion with the Church of England.

Wood's original manuscript (purchased by the Bodleian in 1846) was first published by John Gutch as The History and Antiquities of the Colleges and Halls in the University of Oxford, with a continuation (1786–1790, 2 vols. 4to), and The History and Antiquities of the University of Oxford (1792–1796, 3 vols. 4to), with a portrait of Wood. To these can be added The Antient and Present State of the City of Oxford, chiefly collected by A. à Wood, with additions by the Rev. Sir J. Peshall (1773, 4to; the text is garbled and the editing very imperfect). The Survey of the Antiquities of the City of Oxford, composed in 1661–66 by Anthony Wood, edited by Andrew Clark, was issued by the Oxford Historical Society (1889–1899, 3 vols. 8vo). Modius Salium, a Collection of Pieces of Humour was published at Oxford in 1751, 12mo. Some letters between John Aubrey and Wood were published in the Gentleman's Magazine (3rd ser., ix. x. xi.).

Wood bequeathed his library (127 manuscripts and 970 printed books) to the Ashmolean Museum, and the keeper, William Huddesford, printed a catalogue of the manuscripts in 1761. In 1858 the whole collection was transferred to the Bodleian, where 25 volumes of Wood's manuscripts had been since 1690. Many of the original papers from which the Athenae was written, as well as several large volumes of Wood's correspondence and all his diaries, are preserved in the Bodleian.

Postscript

Oldmixon's History of Newfoundland contains much of his predecessors' Discourses; he quotes Whitbourne liberally, including his lists of animals and trees (fir and spruce abounded as good as any in Norway, Oldmixon said). Overall, however, he stressed the injury and losses experienced by a century of Newfoundland traders. Regardless of all the terrestrial wealth available, cod was the only real reason people went to Newfoundland, he said.

Of the settlement of what is now Nova Scotia, Oldmixon told another case of cannibalism, this time by the natives who murdered one *Verazann*, a Florentine, who was the victim and the feast. Sebastian Cabot already discovered what the French called Acadia, Oldmixon pointed out, proven by his bringing captured natives back to England. Oldmixon related *Captain Samuel Argal* [now Argall] raided Acadia

from New England in 1613-1614 before he settled as Governor of Virginia; Argall was also the captor of Pocahontas and the man who singly established the treaty with the Powhatan Confederacy led by Wahunsonacock, her father.

William Alexander's plantation expedition to plant Nova Scotia set out in 1622 but being late in the year they stopped at Newfoundland for a winter, before going on to Cape Breton the following summer, Oldmixon related, eventually setting up at *Lukes bay*, one of three harbours in the vicinity of *Cape Sable in Acadia*. Alexander's colonial enterprise was on again-off again over the next few years as Acadia changed hands between the French and English monarchies.

Cape Breton Island was an important strategic position, commanding the St. Lawrence River, Oldmixon said, and this was lost to England when the island was turned over to the French, just as Newfoundland was turned over to the English, under the Treaty of Utrecht.