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Sommario/riassunto	Between 1577 and 1660 Newfoundland emerged from relative obscurity to become the centre of a booming and valued industry, the site of one of England's first colonies, and a place of such strategic importance that the English government could not afford to ignore it. From the time of its discovery in the late fifteenth century, the fishermen of Western Europe made annual fishing voyages to Newfoundland. Over a hundred years later, in 1610, the island became the site of England's second permanent colony in North America. The conflict which began at that time between settlers and fishermen has characterized much of the island's history.This volume examines the two themes of settlement and the fishery. The value of the fishery has

been accepted readily enough, but until now no systematic analysis has been made of the industry's growth during its first great period of expansion in the last quarter of the sixteenth century or of its position in the commerce of the ports of western England. Such an analysis is presented in this volume. The author has used customs' records and local port records, summarizing her finds in tables and graphs. While the figures are incomplete and the conclusions drawn from them necessarily tentative, this book is nevertheless an important step in charting the development of England's first transatlantic trade.The earliest attempts to colonize the unsympathetic island of Newfoundland are the least known part of the story of English settlement in North America. Now, thanks to the use of new documentation, in particular a substantial collection of papers relating to the Newfoundland Company, it can be argued that both the company's colony at Cupid Cove and the independent settlements which were its offshoots were far more serious and long-lived enterprises than has often been though. They formed a vital part of the colonial experiences and experiments of the seventeenth century.The story of English activity in Newfoundland sheds further light on the expansion of England. Both the fishing voyages and the first settlements were originally private ventures. But as the European rivalries in the New World continued and as mercantilist theories made colonies increasingly valuable assets, so Newfoundland's importance as a training ground for sailors and as a strategic element in the control of the north Atlantic became more obvious. By the mid-seventeenth century Newfoundland had ceased to be simply a private concern. Somewhat slowly, somewhat reluctantly, the government moved in.