

**THE FIRST ENGLISH CONQUEST
OF CANADA: WITH SOME
ACCOUNT OF THE EARLIEST
SETTLEMENTS IN NOVA SCOTIA
AND NEWFOUNDLAND**

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The First English Conquest of Canada: With Some Account of the Earliest Settlements in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland by Henry Kirke

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HENRY KIRKE

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THE
FIRST ENGLISH
CONQUEST OF CANADA;

WITH SOME ACCOUNT OF

The Earliest Settlements in Nova Scotia and
Newfoundland.



BY

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AUTHOR OF "THURSTAN KEVERELL," &c., &c.



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1871.

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TO
ADMIRAL
SIR HENRY PRESCOTT, G.C.B.,

AT ONE TIME
GOVERNOR OF NEWFOUNDLAND,

THIS BOOK

IS
WITH AFFECTION AND RESPECT,

DEDICATED,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E .

THE opening of the Record Office to the public has made us acquainted with such a vast amount of material, never before accessible to readers, which serves to illustrate the History of England, that it may be taken for granted that the whole of that History will have to be re-written by the light of the new facts which are submitted to us. So great are the changes resulting from such a wholesale discovery of documents, that our belief in the main facts of English History, such as we were taught in our childhood, is in danger of being entirely subverted; and when we leave the beaten track, and attempt, like Macaulay and Froude, to analyse the actions and motives of our leading History makers, we are overwhelmed by the mass of documentary evidence which is now offered to us.

If, therefore, we are to profit by the Records so lately exhumed from obscurity, the received histories of our national story must be overhauled, their doubtful facts and dates rectified, their ambiguities explained, and their numerous *lacunæ* filled up.

The following little book is an attempt to perform these duties to one page of English History; a page somewhat neglected, not dogeared from excessive reading, but almost unknown, not so much from its want of value or its dulness, but rather on account of the many blanks which gape in its narrative, so as to reduce it almost to vacuity. The subject may be considered Colonial rather than English, but at this time (the 17th Century) the Colonies as such could barely be called existing. Patents were issued by different European sovereigns to their subjects, granting unlimited rights over territories unbounded, except by the imagination of the grantors; for which patents considerable sums were exacted, and careful provision was made to protect the rights of the Crown in case of success; but the government of any country rarely, if ever, supported the adventurers who left their shores, though they often, as we shall see, deprived them of the fruits of their exertions. The whole Colonial

History of this period is a continual struggle between the different European nations for the possession of America; and though it has been thought convenient for the purpose of reference to arrange together all the papers relating to the countries which eventually became British Colonies, it is not to be supposed that they were considered to be Colonial when they were written, or were separated from the Foreign correspondence of the period. Mr. Sainsbury is in error when he states in the Preface to his "Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, 1574-1660," "The Papers in the State Paper Office are arranged upon principles which are extremely simple. Derived from the offices of the Secretaries of State, they fall almost as of course, into three great branches or divisions, corresponding with the offices whence they are transmitted. Those for the office of the Home Secretary constitute one principal division or series of volumes, technically termed the Domestic, with a subdivision for Ireland; the papers for the office of the Foreign Secretary form a second or Foreign division or series; whilst those for the Colonial office are arranged in a third division or series, named the Colonial. The present volume is a

Calendar of the last named series of papers only from the year 1574, the date of the earliest paper down to the year 1660," whereas from 1574 to 1660, there were only two Secretaries of State, who transacted the business of the Home and Foreign offices indiscriminately, or made such arrangements as suited their own convenience. A little further on, Mr. Sainsbury confesses that "During this early period a separation of the Colonial from the Domestic or other series, and a classification of the former upon the principles adopted in the correspondence of a later date, has been found to be extremely difficult." At the same time I must record my deep obligations to Mr. Sainsbury's admirable Calendar; without his assistance, the discovery of the necessary papers would have been indeed wearisome, if not impossible.

The papers in the Record Office relating to Canada, Acadia or Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland, are numerous and continuous from the year 1621 to 1660, with the exception of the period from 1640 to 1649, during which years we find no papers relating to any of these countries. This was owing to the Civil War in England, which engrossed the attention of all public men, and prevented them from

taking any notice of the different settlements in America. I have carefully studied all the papers which seemed likely to throw any light upon the subject of this work, in which labour I have been materially assisted by Byam Martin Prescott, Esq., to whom I offer my sincere thanks.

H. K.
