

world exploration and expansion of English trade and empire. At Calvert's birth Sir Francis Drake had just circumnavigated the globe. As Calvert advanced through government service, the East India Company was experiencing years of extraordinary profits from its trading voyages to the Orient, and the Virginia Company was painfully establishing its colony at Jamestown in Virginia. The English government was promoting English settlement in Ireland and several groups were planning colonies in Newfoundland in hopes of controlling the lucrative fisheries. Other groups were proposing various settlements in New England. Calvert, based in London, where the headquarters of all the major companies were located, was exposed to all the promotion. His work with Sir Robert Cecil and as secretary of state brought him into close contact with the problems and prospects of colonization. He must have been keenly attuned to the opportunities that exploration and settlement offered both for individual profit and for England's destiny, and his career in office provided him with the means to participate.²

As George Calvert's income and influence peaked with his appointment as secretary of state, he became active in the organization of colonization projects in Ireland, New England, and especially Newfoundland. In 1620 he purchased part of an earlier Newfoundland grant and in 1621 he established a small settlement at Ferryland on the Avalon peninsula. He hoped to profit from the fishermen, who needed provisions, salt, and a place to clean and repair their boats. His agents returned glowing reports of the climate and the productivity of the soil, and Calvert concluded that the venture had a profitable future. In 1623 he obtained a charter for the colony from King James I.³