MARYLAND

171. THOMAS EDMONSTON, grandson of Jane Beall, daughter of Colonel Ninian Beall, was Ensign under General Rezin Beall at Battle of Harlem Heights, Sept. 16, 1776. Commissioned 1st Lieutenant in Captain Thaddeus Beall's Company Sept. 12, 1777, in the Lower Battalion, Montgomery County Militia. Md. Arch., Vol. XVI, folio 373.

Colonel Ninian Beall

1625–1717

Ninian Beall was born in Largo, in the County of Fifeshire, Scotland, in 1625. He states his age on Aug. 16, 1708, in Liber P. C., folio 625, Chancery Records of 1712–1724, Annapolis, as 83 years.

He was a son of Dr. James Bell, of Largo. He was probably named for Saint Ninian, who lived A. D. 350–432, in Scotland. He was the patron saint of the Lowlands. The natives of the Lowlands pronounced the name as Saint Ringen. This explains the name Ringing Bell, used for Ninian Bell on a number of occasions, by clerks in official papers.

The Festival of Saint Ninian is Sept. 16.

The name Ninian seems to have a French derivative. A historical woman, Ninion de L'Enclos of Paris, 1616–1705, was about 70 when she saw the little boy Arouet, known later as Voltaire. She favored his progress and supplied him with money to purchase books.

Ninian Bell charged with holding a commission of Cornet in the Scotch English Army, raised to resist Cromwell. In the Battle of Dunbar on Sept. 3, 1650, against Cromwell, Ninian Bell with many other Scotch soldiers were captured, tried and condemned to servitude in the British plantations. These plantations consisted of the six northern counties of Ireland, the American Colonies and many of the West Indies Islands.

On account of his familiarity with Irish names and people, after his arrival in Maryland, it is concluded that Ninian Bell spent part of his eight years of servitude in Ireland, and the remainder in the Province of Maryland.

In the Calendar of the British State Papers for Dec. 13, 1666, there is an interesting entry concerning the disposition of Scotch rebel prisoners, to wit: (1) To have all ministers and officers executed.