

Chapter 6

Presbyterian Beginnings in Prince George's County

Although Maryland's founder, Lord Baltimore, was a Roman Catholic, the province had been founded in 1634 upon the premise of religious freedom. The Act Concerning Religion, or Toleration Act, passed by the General Assembly in 1649, served to emphasize this religious freedom and attract men of all faiths. In 1673 it was reported that three-fourths of the inhabitants of Maryland were Presbyterians, Independents, Anabaptists and Quakers, while only one-fourth were members of the Church of England and Roman Catholics.¹

The first Presbyterian Church in the province was started in Charles County in 1657 by the Reverend Francis Doughty. His work was taken over in 1669 by the Reverend Matthew Hill who continued to minister to this congregation until his death in 1679, after which we hear no more of this church. A few years later the Reverend Francis Makemie founded several Presbyterian churches in Somerset County, on the Eastern Shore.²

The Revolution of 1688, which placed the Protestant rulers King William and Queen Mary on the throne of England, was reflected in the Province of Maryland by the Protestant Revolution of 1689, following which the Church of England was established in Maryland. All inhabitants were taxed for the support of the Established Church, so that, after 1692, it became increasingly difficult for dissenting groups to function.

Nevertheless, when Prince George's County was established in 1696, it included among its inhabitants many dissenting Scotsmen who remained true to their Presbyterian faith. Notable among them

¹ *Arch. Md.*, I, 244; V, 133.

² Rev. J. William McIlvaine, *Early Presbyterianism in Maryland*, Baltimore, 1890, pp. 7-16. Also cited in Bernard Steiner, *Presbyterian Beginnings*, Md. Hist. Mag., XV (1920), 305-6; and Clayton Torrence, *Old Somerset on the Eastern Shore of Maryland*, Richmond, 1935, pp. 211-220.

was Colonel Ninian Beall. Beall was born in Largo, Fifeshire, Scotland, in 1625. He had served as cornet in the army raised to resist Cromwell, was captured in the Battle of Dunbar in 1650 and condemned to servitude in the British plantations. He arrived in Maryland in 1658 and was indentured to Richard Hall of Calvert County. From this inauspicious beginning he became one of the leading figures in the province. His military experience and aptitude were recognized early and he rose from the rank of lieutenant in 1668 until in 1694, as a colonel, he was made Commander-in-Chief of the Rangers. He was a big man, over six feet tall, with an iron constitution, factors which were no doubt helpful in his successful dealings with the Indians. In 1699 the General Assembly of Maryland passed "An Act of Gratuity to Colonel Ninian Beall," whereby they recognized his distinguished service and gave him three good servicable Negro slaves purchased out of public funds. Ninian Beall acquired vast land holdings in Maryland; he patented over 25,000 acres of land, mainly in the western part of Calvert County which in 1696 became part of Prince George's County. He was elected one of the first delegates to the General Assembly from the new county. He was living on his estate "Bacon Hall," near Marlborough, when he died in 1717 at the age of 92.⁸

The first record of a Presbyterian Church in Prince George's County is to be found in Ninian Beall's deed of gift of a half acre of land to the Patuxent Congregation in 1704. This half acre of land became a lot in the Town of Marlborough when the town was laid out in 1706.

Ninian Bell Ser to Nath. ^{ll} Taylor &c	}	To all Christian people to whom these presents Shall Come I Ninian Beall Senior of Prince Georges County in y ^e Province of Maryland Send Greeteing Know yee that I the said Ninian Beall being of a good and perfecte minde and without any ffraud or deceit for divers good Causes and Considerations me thereunto mooving but more Espeacially for y ^e Propagation of y ^e Gospell of Christ Jesus have given Granted and Confirmed and by these Presents doe freely, voluntarily & abso- lutely give grant and Confirme unto Nathaniell Taylor Minister of y ^e Gospell to Robert Bradly James Stoddart John Battie Archibald Edmundson Thomas Beall Senior Thomas Beall Junior Ninian Beall Junior Charles Beall Christopher Thompson Joshua Hall John Browne John Henry James Beall Alexander Beall William Ophett John Soaper and to their Successors for y ^e Erecting and Building a House
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⁸ Patent Records, Lib. 5, fol. 416; *Arch. Md.*, XX, 154; XXII, 494; Wills, Liber 14, fol. 504.

for the service of Almighty God, That parcell of Land being Part of a Tract of Land Called the Meddows Lying on y^e Western Branch of Patuxant River in Prince Georges County Beginning at a small Bounded Red Oake near y^e North West Corner of the said Meeting house and running East tenn perches then South Eight perches then west tenn perches then north to y^e first tree Containeing halfe an acre of Land be it more or Less To have and To Hold y^e Said Land and Tennements wth their rights member and appurtenances thereunto belonging unto y^e said Nathaniell Taylor Robert Bradley James Stoddart John Battie Archibald Edmundson Thomas Beall Senior Thomas Beall Junior Ninian Beall Junior Charles Bell Christopher Thompson Joshua Hall John Browne John Henry James Bell Alex^r Beall William Ophett John Soaper and their Successors & to their Onely Propper use for y^e afforementioned use & no other from y^e Day of the date hereof for Ever ffreely Peacably & Quietly without any manner of Reclaime Challenge or Contradiction of me y^e said Ninian Beall my heirs Executors Adm.^{rs} or assignes or of any other Person or Persons by any meanes title or Procurement in any manner or wise and without any account reconing or answer therefore to me or any in my name to be given rendred or don in time to Come See y^e Neither I the said Ninian Beall my heires &c^a nor any other Person or Persons by us for us or in our names or in y^e names of any of us at any time here after may ask claime Challenge or demand in or to y^e Premises or any Part thereof any Interest Right title or Possession but from all Action of Right title Claime Interest use possession & demand thereof wee and Every of us to be utterly Excluded and for Ever debarred by these presents, And I the Said Ninian Beall my Heirs &c^a y^e Said half acre of Land with the appurtenances unto y^e above named Nath Taylor &c^a and their Successors for y^e use above mentioned against all people will warrant & Defend by these presents and I the said Ninian Beall have putt y^e said Nath Taylor &c^a into peacable possession by the delivery of a Peice of money called Sixpence w^{ch} I have paid & Delivered unto y^e said Nath Taylor in behalfe of himselfe and y^e rest of y^e above named persons the day & date hereof In wittness whereof I have hereunto sett my hand & seale y^e 20th day of December anno 1704

Signed Sealed and Delivered

Ninian Beall

In Presens of us

John Wight

Sam^l Magruder⁴

From a perusal of this deed one recognizes that this congregation already had both a meeting-house and a minister. The Reverend

⁴ PGCco, Land Rec., Lib. C, f. 116B.

Nathaniel Taylor had come over from England to minister to this congregation. In August, 1704, he had appeared before the county court at Charles Town and had taken the required oaths and signed the Test.⁵

The deed also gives the names of the officers of the church. All of these men were well-known in the county. Robert Bradley and James Stoddart served the county as justices of the county court and as delegates to the General Assembly, Robert Bradley for several years being Speaker of the Lower House. Except for John Battie, the majority of these men served the county as jurors or as constables, overseers of the highways, or pressmasters of their hundreds. Ninian Beall Jr. and Charles Beall, sons of Colonel Ninian Beall, also served the province as rangers. Thomas Beall Sr. was Ninian's brother, Archibald Edmonston was Ninian's son-in-law. Alexander and James Beall were brothers. Most of these men lived near Marlborough, where the meeting-house was located, but Robert Bradley and James Stoddart lived at or near Charles Town; Charles Beall and James Beall lived near the Eastern Branch; Alexander Beall lived halfway between Marlborough and the Eastern Branch; while John Battie, who was James Stoddart's father-in-law, lived across the Patuxent River in Anne Arundel County.⁶

There were several other early residents of the county who are also known to have been Presbyterians. William Hutchison, a justice of the county court and a delegate to the General Assembly, was named by Commissary Thomas Bray as being a member of the Church of Scotland. In his will Mr. Hutchison left a small bequest to the Reverend Nathaniel Taylor, as did also John Smith of Mattapan Landing. James Shaw, a cooper, left the care of his two older sons to their uncle Christopher Thompson to be educated and brought up in the principles of the Reformed Protestant religion.⁷

Realizing that separate congregations conducting their affairs independently of each other do not constitute a Presbyterian Church, in 1706 the Reverend Nathaniel Taylor agreed to meet at Philadelphia with the Reverend Francis Makemie of Rehobeth, Maryland, and five other ministers from Philadelphia, Delaware, and the

⁵ PGCo. Ct. Rec., Lib. B, f. 309.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Lib. A, f. 1, 7, 254, 261, 443, 459; Lib. B, f. 136, 214a, 228a, 268, 335a; Lib. C, f. 95a, 178a; Lib. G, f. 126; *Arch. Md.*, XXV, 184; XXVII, 225; XXIX, 396; Wills, Lib. 14, f. 391; F. M. M. Beall, *Beall and Bell Families*, Washington, D.C., 1929, pp. 28-50, 85, 130, 148.

⁷ Bernard Steiner, *Rev. Thomas Bray*, Md. Hist. Soc. Fund Publication No. 37, Baltimore, 1901, p. 233; Wills, Lib. 12, f. 150; Lib. 13, f. 317; Lib. 14, f. 606.

Eastern Shore area, to form the Presbytery. This first meeting of the Presbytery, held in December, 1706, marked the beginning of the Presbyterian Church in America.⁸

Nathaniel Taylor was a faithful attendant at the annual meetings of the Presbytery at Philadelphia until his death in 1710. In 1707 he was accompanied by his elder James Stoddart, in 1708 by ——— Beall, and in 1709 by Alexander Beall. He was made corresponding secretary, as he was called upon at each meeting to write the letters expressing the mind of Presbytery.⁹

One of the treasured possessions of the Patuxent Church was a silver communion service, which tradition says was presented to the church by Colonel Ninian Beall. Three pieces of the set, two chalices and a tankard, are still in existence. They are of English silver plate, and the hallmarks indicate that they were made in England in 1707. No doubt they were passed around and used by all the groups meeting with the Reverend Nathaniel Taylor. These priceless treasures have long been in possession of the Hyattsville Presbyterian Church.¹⁰

The first hint that the members living at the Eastern Branch were beginning to form a separate congregation comes to light during the March court, 1706, when Mr. William Tannehill, with the consent of Mr. Thomas Addison, presented a petition to have Mr. Addison's old house at the Eastern Branch declared a meeting-house for the people of the Eastern Branch who would join in worship with the Reverend Nathaniel Taylor. Mr. Tannehill was for many years one of the justices of the county court.¹¹

On October 11, 1709, Dr. Mordecai Moore of Anne Arundel County gave to Nathaniel Taylor, William Tannehill, William Hutton, James Beall, Alexander Beall, William Scott, William Thompson, and their successors, a half acre of land in the southwest corner of "Locust Thicket" lying on the south side of the Eastern Branch of the Potomac River, for the purpose of building a house for the worship of Almighty God. This deed gives us the names of three more men in Prince George's County who were Presbyterians. Wil-

⁸ Maurice W. Armstrong, Lefferts A. Loetscher, and Charles A. Anderson, *The Presbyterian Enterprise*, Philadelphia, 1956, p. 11.

⁹ W. H. Roberts, editor, *Records of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A.*, Philadelphia, 1904, pp. 9-15.

¹⁰ *The Reminder*, a publication of the Brotherhood of Andrew and Philip, of the Hyattsville Presbyterian Church, Hyattsville, Md., Vol. I, Nos. 10-12 (Feb.-April, 1900); Vol. II, Nos. 2-6 (June-Oct., 1900), Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

¹¹ PGCo. Ct. Rec., Lib. C, f. 59.

liam Hatton was a delegate to the General Assembly and also a justice of the Provincial Court. William Scott had served as both an overseer of the highways and constable in his hundred, while William Thompson, brother of Christopher Thompson, had also served as overseer in his hundred.¹²

The Reverend Nathaniel Taylor died in 1710. One gains the impression from the number and names of the books listed in the inventory of his estate, dated February 10, 1710, that he was an erudite scholar. There were more than 500 books, valued at £33.17.7. These were learned treatises, most of them in English, but some were works in Latin, Hebrew, Greek, Chaldean, and Syriac.

Aside from his books, he owned very little. The inventory includes a horse, which would have been indispensable for visiting his parishioners; a saddle, a parcell of old riding furniture, silver spurs & buckles, 2 pr. boots, a sea bed, boulder, quilt & blanket, 2 old hatts, wearing apparrell, stockings & Wiggs, wearing linen, glasses & shoes, 1 hammock, 1 muff, a watch valued at £5, 2 great coats, 6 yd. muslin, writing paper, pictures maps & other small things, which together with 15 shillings 9 pence in cash, brought his entire estate to the value of £72.17.10. Among his books were a number of copies of Tate & Brady's Psalms, an indication that this was the hymnbook used by his congregation.¹³

After the death of Nathaniel Taylor the Patuxent Congregation issued a call to the Reverend George McNish, one of the seven ministers who had formed the Presbytery, but he did not accept the call. The members then sent to England for a minister and called the Reverend Daniel McGill. After he had accepted the call and laid aside his other work, there was a lapse of six months until his actual service at Marlborough began. He was received into Presbytery at the meeting in 1713, which he attended with his elder James Beall. The following year his elder Alexander Beall attended with him.¹⁴

But things did not go smoothly for Daniel McGill at Marlborough. Within two years time discord appeared within the ranks of the congregation, as reported to Presbytery by elder William Scott. However, when questioned, the Reverend Mr. McGill commended his people.¹⁵

¹² PGCo. Land Rec., Lib. D, f. 74-5; PGCo. Ct. Rec., Lib. A, f. 1; Lib. C, f. 95a, 178a; Lib. G, f. 262; *Arch. Md.*, XIX, 365; XX, 379.

¹³ Inventories & Accounts, Lib. 32C, f. 159-165.

¹⁴ Roberts, *op. cit.*, 16-33.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 37-41.

Meanwhile, in 1713, James Stoddart had bought from the Pamunkey and Piscataway Indians some land in the Indian Reservation in the southwest corner of the county, later adding the adjoining tract "Southampton," and had moved there from Charles Town. On November 24, 1713, the Prince George's County Court ordered that the house known as Pamunkey House where Mr. James Stoddart now lives be deemed a meeting-house for the people called Presbyterians. Perhaps part of Mr. McGill's trouble was his dislike of having to travel from Marlborough to Pamunkey House for meetings, a distance of 25 miles, or 50 miles round trip.¹⁶

With a reorganization of the general Presbytery into a general Synod in 1716 the Marlborough Church became a member of New Castle Presbytery. In 1718 the Reverend Daniel McGill attended the Synod at Philadelphia with his elder Alexander Beall, and at this meeting was chosen moderator. He did not attend the semi-annual meetings of the newly formed New Castle Presbytery until September, 1718, when it convened at Philadelphia during this meeting of Synod. Daniel McGill and his elder Alexander Beall attended both meetings.¹⁷

Permission was given by the county court for several more homes at the Eastern Branch to be declared meeting-houses. In November, 1716, the dwelling houses of Alexander Beall and William Tannehill were registered with the court as meeting-houses; in June, 1717, William Thompson's house was recorded for a place for public worship; and in June, 1718, it was ordered by the court that the meeting-house newly built on the land of Charles Beall, near the Forks of the Eastern Branch, be deemed a house of public worship. So it would seem that the people at the Eastern Branch had grown from small separate groups meeting around in homes to one group of sufficient size to erect a meeting-house and support a minister.¹⁸

James Beall appeared at the meeting of Newcastle Presbytery in September, 1718, as the representative of the people of the "Eastern Branch of Potomock and Pummungki upon Potomock," with papers expressing their desire to have a minister settled among them, and issued a call to the Reverend Hugh Conn. Mr. Conn had come over from Great Britain three years earlier to minister to the Patapsco congregation in Baltimore County, but at this meeting of the New

¹⁶ PGCo. Land Rec., Lib. E, f. 229, 270; PGCo. Ct. Rec., Lib. G, f. 444.

¹⁷ Roberts, *op. cit.*, 25-46; "The Records of the Presbytery of New Castle upon Delaware," *Journal of the Department of History* (The Presbyterian Historical Society) of the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Vol. XIV, No. 7, Sept. 1931, p. 295.

¹⁸ PGCo. Ct. Rec., Lib. H, f. 142, 243, 668.

Castle Presbytery had asked to be relieved of his duties there because of "the paucity of the people." He accepted the call and took up his duties as minister of the flock along the Eastern Branch of the Potomac in 1718. There were now two Presbyterian congregations in Prince George's County, the Patuxent congregation at Marlborough and the new church at the Eastern Branch of the Potomac. The Reverend Hugh Conn attended the meeting of New Castle Presbytery in September, 1719, with his elder James Stoddart and was elected moderator.¹⁹

James Stoddart had withdrawn from the Marlborough Church to join the new church. The distance from his home at Pamunky to the meeting-house at the Eastern Branch was just as great as to Marlborough, 25 miles, so that could not have been his reason for changing. Perhaps there was friction with the Reverend Daniel McGill at Marlborough, or perhaps, since Mr. Stoddart had lived at the Eastern Branch for several years prior to 1700, his friendship with these people was deeper than with the members at Marlborough. At the August Court, 1720, he again had his house at the Indian Town, probably a newly built home, recorded as a place of meeting for religious worship.²⁰

Meanwhile at Marlborough misunderstandings persisted between the Reverend Daniel McGill and his congregation, a condition that necessitated the writing of healing letters by Presbytery. One of the points of difference was that McGill requested payment for the six months during which he had been unemployed following his acceptance of their call. The congregation objected to this obligation. There is no record as to how this particular matter was settled; but at the meeting of Synod in 1719 the Reverend Daniel McGill was given synodical testimonials since he was no longer attached to the Patuxent congregation at Marlborough.²¹

At the meeting of Synod the following year, in 1720, Mr. John Orme's testimonials were approved and he was admitted to the New Castle Presbytery as a member. The 29-year old John Orme, who had come over from England at the request of the people at Marlborough, was installed pastor of that congregation, and served as their minister from 1720 until his death in 1758. Elder Archibald Edmonston evidently approved of this new minister, as his daughter Ruth became the wife of John Orme. Being a man of substance,

¹⁹ Rec. of New Castle Presbytery, *op. cit.*, p. 296-7, 301.

²⁰ PGCo. Ct. Rec., Lib. H, f. 1031; PGCo. Land Rec., Lib. A, f. 340.

²¹ Rec. of New Castle Presbytery, *op. cit.*, pp. 298-302; Roberts, *op. cit.*, 55.

Edmonston and his wife gave the couple a tract of land called "Leith" near Marlborough, and Mr. Orme bought an additional tract adjacent to it, part of "Collington."²²

This same Archibald Edmonston, even though a member and elder in the church at Marlborough, assisted in the establishment of the new church on the Eastern Branch of the Potomac. On August 25, 1725, Archibald Edmonston for divers causes, considerations, and sixpence in cash deeded to Hugh Conn, James Stoddart, James Beall, John Beall, John Jackson, William Beall, Ninian Beall, and William Tannyhill, and their successors one acre of land, part of a tract of land called "The Gore" on the east side of the Eastern Branch of Potomac River "which s^d acre of land is given for y^e building or Erecting one or more house or house's for y^e use of a Presbyterian Congregation for y^e worshiping of y^e Almighty God & to no other use or intent what'soever." This acre of land is located just south of Bladensburg in what is now "Evergreen Cemetery," known once as the "Old Presbyterian Cemetery." It was reported in 1900 that a Bladensburg undertaker while digging a grave in this cemetery turned up brick and mortar which he said were parts of the foundation of this early church.²³

The Reverend Hugh Conn had already established his home on the tract of land lying on the Eastern Branch just south of this, 100 acres of "Whitlaintin" given to him by Christopher Thompson, to which he had added the adjoining tract "Hudson's Range" by purchase.²⁴

The lives of these two men, the Reverend Hugh Conn, minister of the church at the Eastern Branch of the Potomac, and the Reverend John Orme, pastor of the Patuxent Congregation at Marlborough, were strikingly similar. They both assumed their ministerial duties at the closely related churches at about the same age (33 and 29) and about the same time (1718 and 1720) and they both continued ministering to these churches until their deaths (1752 and 1758). They were good friends; their names appear on the rolls of Presbytery and Synod meetings together; they went together to the courthouse at Upper Marlborough, each to record his mark of cattle and hogs. The Reverend Mr. Orme's mark was "A

²² Roberts, *op. cit.*, 57-9; Rec. of New Castle Presbytery, *op. cit.*, 307; PGCo. Land Rec., Lib. M, f. 564; Lib. Q, f. 53.

²³ PGCo. Land Rec., Lib I, f. 672; *The Reminder, op. cit.*, Vol. 4, Nos. 7-8 (Dec. 1902-Jan. 1903).

²⁴ PGCo. Land Rec., Lib. I, f. 222, 508.

Crop & under bitt in Each Ear" while the Reverend Mr. Conn's was "A Swallow fork in the right Ear & a Crop and under bitt in the left Ear."²⁵

The Reverend John Orme was the recipient of small legacies bequeathed to him by members of his congregation at Upper Marlborough, among them Edward Holmes, who attended the meeting of New Castle Presbytery in September, 1722. Other members who mentioned Mr. Orme in their wills were John Pottenger, his two sons John Jr. and Samuel Pottenger, and Mrs. Elizabeth Hepburn, widow of Dr. Patrick Hepburn.²⁶

The deed of 1725 to the land at the Eastern Branch gives us the names of three more sons of the Beall clan, John, William, and another Ninian, who were members of this church, also the name of John Jackson, who was a son-in-law of Alexander Beall. Thomas Odell is listed among the elders attending the Synod meeting in 1721. This would be Thomas Odell, Jr., as his father, also named Thomas Odell, was a vestryman of Queen Anne's Parish of the Established Church of England, and was active in St. Barnabas Church, but the younger Thomas was married to a daughter of James Beall, and had no doubt been drawn into the Presbyterian persuasion.²⁷

As the Province of Maryland continued to grow, and more land was needed, the population moved northward. Sons and daughters of the dissenting families from both the Patuxent and Eastern Branch were among these settlers. Both the Reverend Hugh Conn and the Reverend John Orme assisted these young people in starting a new church. On November 22, 1746, Edward Offutt, son of William Offutt of the Marlborough Congregation, and his wife Ellenor, daughter of Archibald Edmonston, granted an acre of land, part of the tract "Outlet," to all the Presbyterian persuasion near the head of Cabin Branch, for a place of Presbyterian worship. This was known as the Captain John (later corrupted into Cabin John) Church. When Edward Offutt did this he were merely carrying on the tradition set by his father-in-law before him, Archibald Edmonston, who had deeded the acre of land to the congregation at the Eastern Branch, and by his grandfather-in-law even before that,

²⁵ *Ibid.*, Lib. Q, f. 595.

²⁶ Rec. of New Castle Presbytery, *op. cit.*, Journ. Presby. Hist. Soc., Vol. XV, No. 2, June, 1932, p. 74; Wills, Lib. 16, f. 5; Lib. 21, f. 326, 366; Lib. 22, f. 59, 443.

²⁷ F. M. M. Beall, *op. cit.*, p. 130, 148; Roberts, *op. cit.*, 60.

Colonel Ninian Beall, who had deeded the half acre of land to the Patuxent Congregation.²⁸

While Prince George's was still the western frontier county, before it was reduced to its present size, there were three Presbyterian Churches in it: The Patuxent Congregation at Upper Marlborough, the church at the Eastern Branch of the Potomac, and the new church at Captain John.

The history of this third church properly belongs to Montgomery County, since two years after this deed was made, Frederick County was detached from the northern part of Prince George's County, and in 1776 Montgomery County was carved out of the lower part of Frederick County. The land belonging to this third church was included in both transfers.

In 1742 the town of Bladensburgh was laid out on the Eastern Branch of the Potomac River just a short distance to the north of the meeting-house on the Eastern Branch, and the church there came to be known as the Bladensburgh Presbyterian Church. The Reverend Hugh Conn continued to serve as pastor until his death, a dramatic incident. The *Maryland Gazette* for Thursday, July 9, 1752, carried the following item:

"On Sunday the 28th of June last, the Reverend Mr. Hugh Conn, a Presbyterian Minister, as he was preaching to a Congregation near Bladensburg in Prince George's County, dropp'd down dead in his Pulpit. The Subject he was upon gave him Occasion to mention "the certainty of Death, the Uncertainty of the Time when it might happen, the absolute Necessity of being continually prepared for it, the vast Danger of Delay to be constantly in such a State, or trusting to a Death Bed Repentance; for that altho' we may possibly live some Years, yet, we may be called away in a Month, or in a Week; or for aught any one could tell, Death might surprize us the next Moment:" which last part of his Discourse he was observed to deliver with some Elevation of Voice; but had scarce utter'd the Word Moment, when, without speaking any more (putting one Hand to his Head, and the other to his Side), he fell backward and expired; verifying in a most extraordinary Manner the Truth of his Doctrine."

Six years later, in the *Maryland Gazette* for Thursday, May 11, 1758, we read the following item:

²⁸ Wills, Lib. 21, f. 92; F. M. M. Beall, *op. cit.*, p. 88; PGCo. Land Rec., Lib. EE, f. 104; Rev. George S. Duncan, Ph.D., *Outline History of Captain John, Hermon and Copley Presbyterian Churches in Montgomery County, Maryland*, Washington, 1926, Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia.

“On the 28th of April, Died in Prince-George’s County, aged 67 Years, the Reverend Mr. John Orme, many Years Pastor of a Dissenting Congregation at Upper-Marlborough, whose exemplary life and Conversation gain’d him the general Esteem of People of all Denominations.”

The church at Upper Marlborough did not long survive the death of the Reverend John Orme. Its meeting-house was taken over by the Trinity Protestant Episcopal Church, which still worships on the same site. But the Eastern Branch or Bladensburg Church still flourishes as the Hyattsville United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., and counts as one of its treasures the silver communion service given to the Patuxent Church in 1707 by Colonel Ninian Beall.