

CHAPTER 2-THE EARLY HISTORY OF SCOTTISH FAMILIES

It has been written by some Col. Ninian Beall descendants that *by the 4th century B. C. the Celts came across the sea to England, Ireland, and Scotland. Supposedly a division of the northern Celts called Picts settled in Fife in Scotland. They were a tribal organization with priests, nobles, craftsmen, and peasants. They were also farmers who raised cattle and other domestic animals. They were tall with long heads, light eyes, and black or red hair.*

From this general location around Glasgow or Lanark, Scotland, would rise many who would later be players on the stage of religious persecution with a descendant from the Celts being a primary factor. Providing an outlet for escape from this religious persecution would be a descendant from a family in Fife named Col. Ninian Beall. Among those whom he aided were the Taylors, MacTavishes/Thomsons, Taggarts, Offutts, and others, completing a total of about two hundred Scottish families.

An article written about the Beall family claims that the Celts relied on the ministry of the druids. Those druids were worshipers of nature and would have been of the same classification as the worshipers of Baal in the Old Testament of the Holy Bible. They believed in the god of the brook, the god of a tree, etc. They equated the environment around them as possessing a 'spirit.'

The Beall article also claims that the druid priests became known by the name Beall. That seems to be a natural proliferation of the term 'Baal.' They pronounced the name as 'bell.'

Then about the 5th century A. D. the St. Ninian and his disciples brought Christianity to Scotland. St. Ninian was supposedly the son of a British chief in Galway who was already a Christian. Many churches were dedicated to the name of St. Ninian and he is buried at the cemetery on Molindnar Burn. The speculation by the Beall family is that Ninian Beall was probably named after him.

One Beall family article states that Ninian Beall's father was Dr. James Beall of Largo, Fifeshire, Scotland, and that he was born in the year 1625 at Largo in East Scotland. The article claims that Ninian grew to be seven feet tall and had red hair.

Largo is in the lowlands near the Lomond Hills in an area where fishing villages from an ancient times lie on the eastern coast. Fishing was likely an occupation of that time period. Vocations of farming, mining, weaving, glass making, and shipbuilding existed. There also was a judicial system and a school that children were required to attend.

Edinburgh, Scotland, became a focus point for the battle between the Catholic and Protestant faiths with Mary Stuart and John Knox as symbols of that struggle. Eventually a fierce quarrel began about 1603 and enveloped the forces of Catholicism and Protestantism for about one hundred years.

This struggle between opposing religious viewpoints witnessed the flinging of 'Jenny Geddes's stool' in St. Giles and then the signing of the Scottish National Covenant in 1638.

James VI of Scotland became James I of England in March 1603 when he was declared a rightful heir upon the death of Queen Elizabeth I. It is important to remember that during the reign of James as King of both Scotland and England, the two nations retained their separate parliaments and privy councils. They passed their own laws and enjoyed their own law courts; they had their own national church, their own ways of levying taxes and regulating trade, and to a certain extent, they could pursue their own foreign policies.

The seat of Scotland's oldest university was St. Andrews, which was founded about 1411. It was the ecclesiastical capital of Scotland until the Reformation and was located in Fife. Dufermline, which was also in Fife, was the royal seat held by the Stuarts. Charles I, second son of King James I and Anne of Denmark, was born there.

Scotland itself was practically two distinct nations. There was a huge division between Highland and Lowland.

James' attempts to persuade the clan chiefs to adopt the Protestant faith were a failure. They clung to the military habits of their ancestors, their Jacobite (Catholic) heritage and continued the Gaelic tongue when most of Scotland had abandoned it in favor of English. James also had a long-running quarrel with the Presbyterian Scottish Kirk (a strict form of Protestantism) and resented what he saw as their interference in matters of state.

One online Web site states that Presbyterianism as practiced by the Scots was a hard, unyielding faith. It was deeply suspicious of Christmas, and abominated graven images such as the crucifix. It did not recognize Easter as a celebration. James insisted that his divine authority came before the kirk's civil jurisdiction. This conflict between two uncompromising factions was to strongly influence this whole period of Scottish history. James, despite his Scots ancestry, left London to visit his native country only once in the years he held the 'two Crowns' between 1603 and 1625.

On the accession to the throne, Charles I in 1625 was determined to continue the work of his father. Charles therefore proposed bringing the Scots church into line with that of England, an extremely controversial move which provoked outrage north of the border. He was an opponent of Presbyterianism and thought it would be simpler if all his subjects would adopt Episcopacy (government of the church by Crown appointed Bishops). He therefore planned the introduction of the 'Book of Common Prayer' into the Scottish church service. This took some time to plan and it was not until 23rd July 1637 that the new liturgy, which many Scots believed to be more Catholic than Protestant, was ordered to be read in the Church of St. Giles in Edinburgh.

On 28th February 1638 the 'National Covenant' was produced on behalf of the Church of Scotland, backed by the nobility and gentry, in opposition to the new book of prayer. This was essentially an anti-Papist declaration and 60,000 folk gathered to sign the documents which had been placed on public display in Greyfriars church, Edinburgh. Other copies were taken throughout the country for further signatures, bringing the Scottish Kirk into direct conflict with the King and the rule of law.

In 1643 Charles was ousted from the throne during a bloody Civil War by the English parliamentarians and Oliver Cromwell was installed as Lord Protector. One of his first tasks was to execute the King who was promptly beheaded. The English Parliamentarians agreed that Presbyterianism should be adopted as the national religion throughout England and Scotland as they were anxious to have the Scots allied against the still dangerous forces of the Crown. The Covenanters therefore sided with Cromwell and a period of stability ensued. The treaty between the two was called the 'Solemn League and Covenant.' This was essentially a marriage of convenience.

Articles pertaining to the Col. Ninian Beall appear to be contradictory about his religious ties. The Maryland documents show that the Col. Ninian Beall was instrumental in transporting the Scottish Covenanters to America about 1685. Yet the Beall articles appear contradictory because they claim that he fought with the royalists in opposition to Cromwell with whom the Covenanters were siding. There is an account which was written by Beall family descendants about the Col. Ninian Beall and which is contradictory to evidence which shows that he was a Covenanter. This account states that the Col. Ninian Beall took part in a Scottish Royalist invasion at Preston against Cromwell. Cromwell was a supporter of the Scottish Covenanters and allowed the Scottish people to practice their own religion in peace without interference from the government. So the question that springs forth is whether or not the Col. Ninian Beall was a mercenary who sold his services to the supporters of Charles II, the son of Charles I? The Beall family article states:

'Oliver Cromwell, an active leader in the Puritan cause, had risen to power in England, and in 1648 he repelled the Scottish Royalists' invasion at Preston. Scotland had become Presbyterian, principally through the work of John Knox, although the Stuarts favored the Episcopal Church. In 1649, Cromwell's political power was enhanced by the removal of Presbyterian leaders from Parliament. In 1650, he invaded Scotland and defeated the Royalist Scots at Dunbar. More than 3,000 Scotsmen were slaughtered on the field and 10,000 prisoners were taken. The wounded among these were released, but 5,000 were sent into virtual slavery in Northumbria, and the rest were shipped off to America and the West Indies. Among these was Ninian Beall who held a commission as a cornetist in the Scottish-English Army under Leslie raised to resist Cromwell, and fought and was made a prisoner in the battle of Dunbar, September 3, 1650. He was sentenced to five years of servitude and, after a short stay in Ireland,

was packed into the hold of a prison ship with 149 other Scotsmen and sent to Barbados, West Indies.

About 1652, he was transferred, still a prisoner, to the Province of Maryland where he served five years with Richard Hall of Calvert County. 'Then came Ninian Beall of Calvert County, planter, and proved his right to 50 acres of land for his time in service, as military prisoner, performed with Richard Hall of said county. This servitude which came to him through the fortunes of war was an Honor.' (From Liber 2, Folio 195, Maryland Land Office, Jan. 16, 1957)

When Ninian was captured and exiled, he was already a husband and father, although his Scottish wife, Elizabeth Gordon, probably died even before the battle of Dunbar. Thomas, one of the sons of this marriage, eventually came to America (about 1667).'

Scotland was now under English rule and the Church of Scotland enjoyed a time of spiritual prosperity. Cromwell was a supreme lord of a united Britain which was now a conquered country living under an army of occupation. However it was to be short-lived as Cromwell died in 1658 and in May 1660 Charles' son, Charles II was fully restored to the throne. He soon passed an act which enforced the people to recognize him as the supreme authority in matters both Civil and Ecclesiastical. The Church of Scotland rejected this and was thrown into the furnace of persecution for twenty eight-long years until 1688.

Online historical articles indicate that in 1661 the National Covenant was repudiated by Charles II. The following year the Covenant was torn up and Charles' own Bishops and curates were appointed to govern the churches and 400 non-conforming ministers were ejected from their parishes. At first the authorities tolerated them preaching in houses, barns or the open-air, but it was soon realized that the people's resolve was such that they would not attend the government-appointed Episcopal minister's services. The first attempt at limiting attendance at these conventicles was made in 1663 and by 1670 attendances became treasonable and preaching at them, a capital offence.

By 1666 the persecution by soldiers who were given lists of the names of the non-attendees by the curates, was so bad that the country became increasingly restless. When the village of Dalry in Galloway witnessed an old man being roasted with branding irons by the soldiers, a rebellion commenced. It had not been planned, but numbers flocked to the cause and a spontaneous march took place in horrific November weather via Lanark toward Edinburgh. The exhausted Covenanters were ultimately defeated at Rullion Green in the Pentland Hills when an army of 3,000 led by General Tam Dalyell routed the meager band of 900 protestors. One hundred were killed on the battlefield and 120 taken prisoner and marched to Edinburgh and charged with treason and rebellion. It is estimated that a further 300 Covenanters escaped, but died or were slain on their way home.

The captured Covenanters were crowded into part of the High Kirk in Edinburgh known as 'Haddock's Hole'. They were brought before the Justiciary Court and on December 7, 1666 they were found guilty and sentenced to be hanged on the Mercat Cross in Edinburgh. As many as ten at a time were despatched on one scaffold, dismembered and the pieces exhibited in the Covenanter's own locality as a warning.

On 13th August 1670 the government declared that conventicles, or meetings in the fields were illegal and it was a capital offence to attend these. The authorities were concerned that these were becoming a hotbed of revolutionary ideas. The vast outdoor assemblies were being thrilled by the preacher's words of fiery defiance and doom-laden prophecies. However the Presbyterians defied them and held secret religious meetings in the hills, usually with a circle of lookouts, often armed, posted around the site to watch for approaching dragoons. There were many bloody skirmishes amongst the bare lowland landscape. This was a time of legends, of the soldiers fun in throwing women in pits full of snakes, of men hanged on their own door lintels.

All conventicles were to be broken up and any land owner who refused to help could be fined; instead of turning master against man however, it forged links of shared suffering. Secret conventicles were attended by up to thousands of people at only a few hours notice, with mass marriages being carried out with a rock as an altar and baptisms performed in small streams. Followers of the Covenant were willing to risk the fines and sentences in order to hear the preachers. For example 7,000 people attended a conventicle near Maybole in Ayrshire in 1678, performed by four ministers and at East Nisbet in Berwickshire the same year 3,200 took part of which 1,600 were

seated.

A massive conventicle took place on Skeoch Hill in Kirkcudbrightshire in 1679. There were 6,000 Covenanters in attendance to hear three preachers, of which 3,000 were allowed to take part in communion. In the center of the congregation a series of large boulders were arranged in four parallel rows for the communicants, perhaps around 300 at a time to sit on. These stones, known as the Communion stones are still there.

Often the conventicle was infiltrated by a few non-adherents who slipped off early to inform the authorities. The Covenanters had to be highly vigilant as the threat of armed intervention was ever present. The participants were most likely to be captured or executed, usually on their way to and from conventicles. The fact that they were away from home and probably had a bible in their possession was enough for the authorities to justify fining or executing them, often killing them where they stood.

The government was becoming desperate and in early 1678, nine thousand soldiers from the largely Catholic highlands were brought south from their garrison in Stirling to Glasgow and the south-west. The town fathers of Ayrshire wrote to the Earl of Lauderdale, a senior official requesting him not to send so 'inhumane and barbarous crews of spoilers' into that county. The appeal fell on deaf ears. Parties of highland soldiers were quartered on land owned by suspected Covenanter sympathizers who were required to feed them and keep them for nothing. These were known as the 'Highland host' and the highlanders were responsible for many atrocities, robbing their hosts of all belongings and livestock; rape, pillage and destruction. Thousands of pounds worth of damage and theft were done in the few months they were in residence. One example was in Kilmarnock where nine highland soldiers were quartered on William Dickie for six weeks. He was required to supply them with food and drink and when they eventually left his house, they stole bags full of ornaments, cutlery, plates and a sock full of money, to a total value of 1,000 merks (Scottish pounds). The soldiers also maltreated him and his family. His wife was pregnant, yet one of the highlanders stuck a dirk (knife) into her side and she died soon after. Dickie himself was struck on a number of occasions for not supplying all the soldiers needs and one of the beatings resulted in two broken ribs.

The minister of Kilmarnock, Rev Alexander Wedderburn, was so appalled by the actions of the highlanders in the town that he condemned them in one of his sermons. The highlanders heard this and caught up with him as he walked through the streets. In a scuffle one of the soldiers lunged at the minister with the butt of his gun, wounding him and causing him to fall to the ground. He died shortly after of respiratory disease.

Many parishes have records which detail the cost of putting up the highlanders, sums in money which were long in recouping. For example, two hundred and fifty soldiers and officers from Caithness were quartered within the Parish of Cumnock for fifteen nights and the total losses recorded in the accounts were £3015 6s 8d. The total for Avondale Parish in Lanark shire was reckoned to be £1,700, although it has been surmised that this figure was only one third of the true total.

The situation was becoming grave in the Lowlands and South West and by 1679 the men of Galloway were to rise again in what became known as the 'Second Resistance'. It began with the 'Rutherglen Declaration' when they condemned the proceedings of the government since 1660. Shortly afterwards a huge conventicle was arranged, somewhere in Lanark Shire. This was more than a gesture of defiance, it was a challenge the government had to meet to retain their credibility. John Graham of Claverhouse, known to his enemies as 'Bloody Graham' rode out from Glasgow with about 180 dragoons, to deal with them. Born in 1648, near Dundee, he was abhorred by the Covenanters for the part he played in ordering the execution of many friends and supporters, many being killed by his own hands.

He found them drawn up in order of battle at the farm of Drumclog, near Loudoun Hill, on the morning of 1st June 1679. They had chosen their position skillfully, in front was a deep ditch and all around were bogs. About 1500 in number the Covenanters had little fear of the scarlet soldiers coming toward them on horseback. After an exchange of musket fire with little effect, Claverhouse held back as he had no one to guide his men through the morass. His enemies solved his problems for him. Led by William Cleland, a young man who was later to become a famous soldier as the first colonel of the Cameronians, a large party of men made their way around the ditch

and threw themselves on the dragoons who by now had dismounted. Bugged down in the marshy ground and totally outnumbered, the soldiers had no advantage as they were attacked at close quarters by sword, pike and pitchfork. Thirty-six dragoons were killed, seven made prisoner and the rest fled toward Strathaven. Claverhouse had lost the battle of Drumclog.

Thinking their hour had come, the Covenanters proposed a march on Glasgow but discovered that the fearful residents had placed barricades across the streets to prevent them from entering the city. It was now full scale civil war, with the militia mobilized and armed men guarding the fords over the River Forth on the approaches to Edinburgh. The Covenanters turned about and at Bothwell Bridge, a crossing over the River Clyde just north of Hamilton they made their stand. By now they had become a rabble with no attempt at military formation.

This time they were soundly defeated by government troops led by the Duke of Monmouth, with perhaps 600 killed on the field and in the subsequent pursuit, 1,200 taken prisoner. Most of these were marched to Edinburgh where they were locked up in an enclosure of Greyfriars Kirkyard. Five months later after many had escaped, some had died and others were forced to sign a declaration of government support, 257 Covenanters remained. They were sentenced to banishment to the American plantations and placed on board a ship at Leith. However it foundered off the Orkney Islands in the far north of Scotland, with almost all on board being drowned.

There is a story about a James Thomson who was a martyr for the Covenanter cause. He was born about 1630 and was a farmer from Tanhill which is on the west side of Lesmahagow Parish, bordering Stonehouse. The family of the martyr was in earlier times located in a place called Cunningair or Collingair in Stonehouse parish opposite Dovesdale. It was from here in the late 1500's that James Thomson's family was to travel to the lands at Tanhill. Little is known about him, except he died of wounds inflicted at the Battle of Drumclog in 1679. His son and his wife suffered imprisonment and James was later interred in Stonehouse, St. Ninian's old Kirkyard. His descendants renewed his stone in 1832 and it was repaired again in 1955 due to damage caused by the elements of nature. His descendants have been numerous, and many of them have been ruling elders in the Church of Scotland. Many inhabitants of Stonehouse today can trace their origins from the family line, including a large number of Sorbies.

The period from 1680 until 1685 is called the 'killing times' and was one of the fiercest in terms of persecution and a few months between 1684-5 became forever known as the 'Killing Times.' Charles' brother James II had come to the throne, and he was a believer in the Devine Right of Kings and a supporter of the Roman Catholic faith. It became his sworn intent to totally eradicate the Presbyterians. Parish Lists were drawn up in accordance with instructions to the Episcopalian Curates to furnish Nominal Rolls of all persons, male and female, over the age of 12 within their Parishes. The Ministers were ordered to give 'a full and complete Roll of all within the Parish' and 'that to their Knowledge they give Account of all Disorders and Rebellions, and who are guilty of them, Heritors or others.' Their instructions concluded, 'No remarks need be made upon these Demands made upon every Curate in every Parish; they are plain enough, as also their Design.' The 'design' of this census was obviously to assist in the control and persecution of the Covenanters. The list drawn up for Wigtownshire in 1684, featured a total of 9,276 individuals in the 19 Parishes and was probably ordered by John Grahame of Claverhouse who had been appointed the Sheriff of Wigtownshire. Amongst the list were - Marion Sorbie from Auchleand, Burgh of Wigtown; Catherine Sorbie from Lochans, Parish of Inch; John and James Sorbie from Minnigaff and Patrick Sorbie from Claughan of Penninghame.

These were the most horrific and atrocious times ever inflicted on the people of Scotland. The Covenanters were now flushed out and hunted down as never before and the common soldier was empowered to take life at will of any suspect without trial of law. Usually it was done without any evidence and often as the result of the suspicions of an overzealous town official or Minister. Brutality in these days defied the imagination and the persecution had no mercy on man, woman or child, irrespective of circumstances. Any class of Covenanter once caught by the King's troops was shot or murdered on the spot.'

Probably the most moving and almost an apostle like details of persecution and suffering were written about Donald Cargill. The following information is taken from link:

http://www.ianpaisley.org/article.asp?cov_donaldcargill.htm

The most interesting section of the article is about the death of Donald Cargill and of one William Thomson at Edinburgh, Scotland: The discussion picks up with 'Cargill went to England for three months, when, says Patrick Walker, 'The Lord blessed his labors in the ministry to the conviction and edification of many souls.' There were brave English hearts among those who took the Covenant, and in the grey northern land far from their homes some gave their all for Christ, such as Colonel Rumbold, ex-Cromwellian soldier, who contended that no man was born into the world with a saddle on his back, neither was there born another with spurs on his feet to ride him! His death was a cruel one; He died saying that if every one of his grey hairs was a life, he would give them all for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Cargill returned to Scotland in April 1681, and gave himself to constant preaching. He gave his last message at Dunsyre, near Lanark, on 10 July. That night, asleep in bed at Covington Mill, he was taken a prisoner with the young men, Waiter Smith and James Boig. The rude accounts of their capture given by the authorities accord but ill with that given by young, soon-to-die, Waiter Smith, who wrote, 'We were singularly delivered by Providence into the adversaries' hand, and, from what I could learn, were betrayed by none, nor were any accessories to our taking more than we ourselves, and particularly let none blame the Lady of St John's Kirk in this.' She attended Covenanter meetings. Patrick Walker did blame her. He felt that she had plenty of time to send word to Covington Mill while her own house was being searched.

For fear of a rescue, their captors, Irvine of Bonshaw and his troop, hurried them away through Lanark, Glasgow and to Edinburgh. In Lanark, the three were tied fast on bareback horses. Bonshaw himself tied Cargill's feet very hard below the horse's belly. The Covenanter looked down at him and asked, 'Why do you tie me so hard' Then he sadly added, 'Your wickedness is great. You will not long escape the just judgment of God. If I am not mistaken, it will seize upon you in this place.' It did! Next year he got his reward. 'The price,' says Patrick Walker, 'of innocent blood, precious blood, dear blood, blood that cries both loud and long!' Coming to Lanark, 'he and one of his cursed comrades fell fighting, and in the fight Bonshaw was thrust through and died of his wounds.

'Roths raged against him. Roths threatened him with extraordinary torture and violent death.' Cargill appeared before several courts, and on 26 July was sentenced to die next day with Waiter Smith and James Boig, students of theology, William Thomson, servant, and William Cuthill, seaman. The members of 'the Council were very fierce and furious against Cargill,' says Patrick Walker, 'especially Chancellor Roths,' and he records, 'Roths raged against him. Roths threatened him with extraordinary torture and violent death.' Donald Cargill, looking at Roths, said, 'My Lord Roths, forbear to threaten me; for die what death I will, your eyes shall not see it; and 'tis well known to some yet alive that he died that morning that Mr Cargill, and those worthies with him, suffered in the afternoon.

After the Council meeting, Roths took very ill. He sent his wife, Countess Roths who favored the Good Old Cause, for one of her Covenanter ministers, saying 'that his own were good to live with but not to die with.' Two Covenanters, John Carstairs and George Johnston, came to him. 'Carstairs,' says Patrick Walker, 'dealt very faithfully and freely with him, rehearsing many wicked acts of his life; to whom he said, 'We all thought little of what that man did in excommunicating us, but I find that sentence binding upon me now, and will bind to all eternity.' There were noblemen there. Continues Patrick Walker, Roths roaring so loud under the horror of conscience for his active wicked life in persecuting, made these noblemen leave him, weeping. William Duke of Hamilton said, 'We banish these men from us, and yet when dying we call for them. This is melancholy work.'

The five received their sentence with trumpet blast. Said Cargill, 'That's a weary sound, but the sound of the last trumpet will be a joyful sound to me, and all that will be found having on Christ's righteousness.'

The Cloud of Witnesses for the Royal Prerogatives of Jesus Christ, comparable with The Scots Worthies, must be one of the greatest books of martyrology ever published. Surely it is right that it should open with 'Donald Cargill,' chronologically taken out of position though the account be, to lead the life-stories of witnesses - ministers, weavers, tailors, laborers, serving-men, serving-maids, noblemen and noblewomen, farmers and others from all walks of life, through its more than six hundred pages. Smith and Boig follow Cargill in honored place.

William Cuthill from the Forth seaport, Borrowstouness, familiarly known as Bo'nness, wrote a long preamble

about things relative to his times, followed by pages of his own personal testimony, as from 'One ready to step into Eternity. One of Christ's sufferers.' He closes requesting 'All to bear with faults of weakness, especially when the sword of the adversary is above a man's head'; and he takes farewell of the world and all things in it saying, 'Welcome, Lord Jesus Christ; into Thy hands I commend my spirit.'

The serving man from Fife, William Thomson, was asked during his trial if to save his life he would say 'God save the king.' His answer to that was, 'I shall not beg my life at so dear a rate as to commit sin.' In his testimony he made very clear, what every other Covenanter did, too, that is, plainly show that he was ready to die for what he had been condemned, and that he was more a Covenanter than his judges had ever thought him to be. Following his pages of witness against evil man and Devil, he closes by recommending the Cross of Christ, saying, 'I think they want a good bargain of it that want it, and I think they want nothing that have it, and get leave to carry it heartsomely and His Presence under it; I would advise you all to take it on. I dare say this much for your encouragement, that it is easy and sweet.'

The story of the Thomson family from Edinburgh, Scotland begins with a lost history about the MacTavish Family from which the Thomsons originated. DNA evidence shows that a William MacTavish descendant from Lanark, Scotland is a match to William Thomson Descendants. One Charles County, Maryland document indicates that William's nephew William Thompson of London, England was the eldest son of Walter Thomson and wife Margaret Thomson. Walter Thomson, deceased per that document, was formerly a merchant of Edinburgh, Scotland. Based on the Scottish naming tradition the eldest son would have been named after Walter and William's father, hence their father's name should have been William and probably would have been born sometime around 1627. These Thomsons were a large family that was spread out in the general area of Lanark, Scotland and with some members living in Edinburgh, Scotland. Walter and William's father was born about the time that King Charles I came into power and would have been a member of landed gentry. His wife was Margaret and some of the couple's children were Walter, Christopher, and William.

In 1637 King Charles I attempted to force feed his form of religion down the throats of the Presbyterian Scots and they responded with the Scottish National Covenant as discussed in the previous chapters. Their primary objection to the covenant was that the Scots believed that Jesus was the head of the church and not the pope and not the king. They believed in the individual right to govern each church body with a "kirk" and this conflicted with the king's desire of a centrally controlled church with himself as the head of the church. The Scots also DID NOT believe in the pagan holidays of Christmas, Easter, or pagan rituals.