

## *The Alexanders: one of FTs first settlers*

Until 1767 the land south of Stricklersville Road was claimed by both the Penn and Calvert families. King James I granted land (Maryland) to Sir George Calvert in 1632. In 1681 William Penn received a great deal of land (Pennsylvania and Delaware) from King Charles II to satisfy a debt that the King owed to Penn's father. This created a dispute over the border between Maryland and Pennsylvania as both of the land charters overlapped.

The Calvert family encouraged settlement of their lands and solicited colonists to come and settle in the new world. In 1676, a Scotch Irish family, with seven brothers and two sisters, by the name of Alexander came from Donegal, Ireland. Some settled in Cecil County others further south in Somerset, Pocomoke and in Virginia. They were farmers, weavers, tanners and blacksmiths. Several Alexanders located just south of Stricklersville Road (now in Fairhill) as they received a 2000 acre land grant in 1717 and 1718. These land grants included the land in Franklin from the Maryland border to Stricklersville Road to Tweeds Mill on the Big Elk Creek. A petition was signed by the Alexander's in 1722 attesting to the fact that they believed this land was in Maryland.

This started a 50-year dispute and long process over which government – the Calverts/Maryland or the Penns/Pennsylvania - owned this piece of land. In 1732 an agreement was signed by Lord Baltimore to accept a still undefined, but designated



*The remains of the original Alexander homestead can be seen in Fair Hill Natural Resources Area.*

border, which the Mason-Dixon survey settled in 1767. Some of the land granted to the Alexanders was indeed in Pennsylvania.

By this time all the original seven Alexander brothers and two sisters had passed away. They never learned the outcome of this disagreement.

The Alexander family was a hardy family and had many children. Soon there was not enough land for all of them to continue to live here and through the years the family expanded to Tennessee, North Carolina and up the Susquehanna River to York and other surrounding areas. However, many of our many-generation township residents' ancestors more than likely were an Alexander.

Alexander family members were the founders of both Head of the Christiana Presbyterian Church on Rt. 273 in Delaware and the Rock Church on Rt. 273 in Maryland. Many of them are buried there.