

ful Patuxent River. The sessions of both 1654 and 1657 were held in the "great room" of this lovely place, which is part of Preston at Patuxent. They were the 14th and 15th sessions of the General Assembly of Maryland. This "great room" was also the meeting place of the Maryland Courts for several terms.

The Government House was built in 1650 by Richard Preston, who had come to Maryland from Virginia in 1649 as a leader of the thousand or more Puritans then being persecuted in Virginia. They were invited to Maryland by Cecil Calvert, some settling in Calvert County and the majority establishing the town of Providence, now Annapolis, in Anne Arundel County. Richard Preston was elected Speaker of the House at the session held in 1654. He continued as a member of the General Assembly during the 1660's and in 1669 attended as a member from the newly established County of Dorchester.

The broad acres of the famous Preston Plantation overlooking miles of the blue Patuxent River, now stand in their full production glory showing the loving care and fine husbandry which have been showered upon them by their present owners, Mr. and Mrs. A. Claude Turner, and their family for many generations.

This lovely old place where the General Assembly met in 1654, now owned by Captain and Mrs. Don Smith, is the second oldest of all existing houses in Maryland. That it should be located in Calvert County is uniquely appropriate, for both the old house and the good citizens of the County have ever been close to the land, the sun and the water, as symbols of the true and lasting values of life.

The members of the Calvert County Delegation in the General Assembly of Maryland and the present owners and occupants of the famous meeting place of the General Assembly in 1654 and 1657, Captain and Mrs. Don Smith, have graciously invited the members of the General Assembly to attend at the former seat of government on a date to be set in the early autumn of 1954, there to participate in a fitting recognition of the historic traditions of this shrine, and to rededicate themselves to the spirit of democratic living and republican government which for three full centuries has held the people of Calvert County close to the best traditions of popular government. The members of the General Assembly in 1954, themselves the stewards of a long and honorable tradition of self-government, acknowledge with grateful pride the Three Hundredth Anniversary of the establishment of Calvert County, Now, Therefore, be it