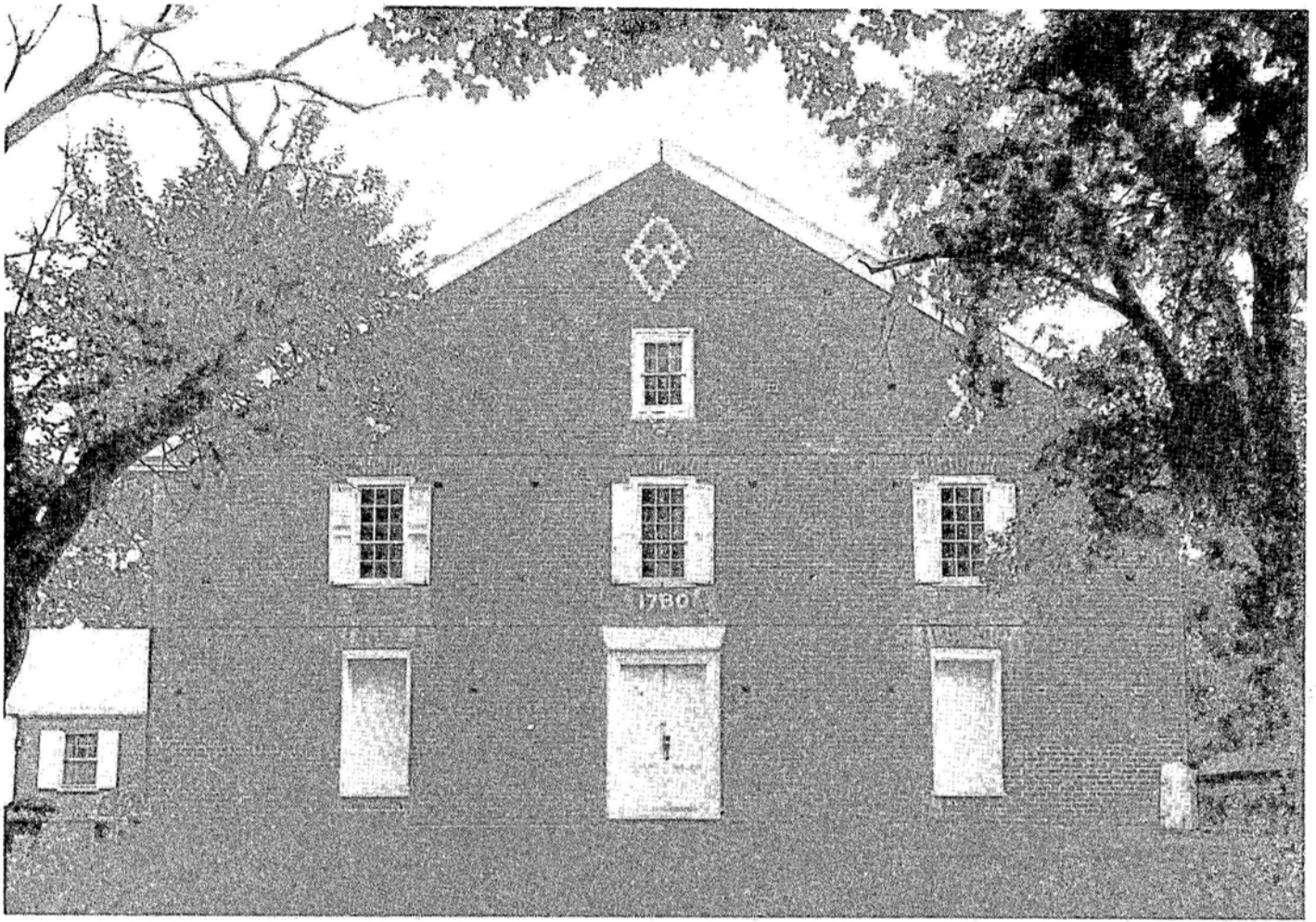


UNITED METHODIST NATIONAL HISTORIC SHRINES



BARRATT'S CHAPEL, located ten miles south of Dover, Delaware, on state route 113, was erected in 1780. The brick exterior remains the same as when constructed, with minor changes having been made in the interior. Under the leadership of Freeborn Garrettson, a society of Methodists was organized in the community in 1778. In May of 1780, Phillip Barratt, a member of this first society, gave a tract of land to the society with the understanding that they would build a church. Once the chapel was under construction a local man predicted that the building was much too large for the Methodists. Expressing the suspicion attached to the patriotism of the Methodists during the Revolution, he is said to have remarked: "It is unnecessary to build such a house, for by the time the war is over, a corn-crib will hold them all." A quarterly meeting was held at Barratt's Chapel on November 14, 1784, and Thomas Coke and Richard Whatcoat, recently arrived from England, conducted services. Francis Asbury arrived after the service had begun, but following the meeting he and Coke laid plans for the now historic Christmas Conference and Freeborn Garrettson was sent to call the conference together for a meeting at Lovely Lane Meeting House in Baltimore on December 24, 1784. Today Barratt's Chapel is owned and maintained by the Peninsula Annual Conference Historical Society. In 1964 a museum and curator's residence was constructed and a full-time curator is assigned to this work.