CHAPTER IV
THE BUILDING

In 1983, over 5,000 visitors wending their way south of Dover on Route 13 pause to gaze at the old brick walls of Barratt's Chapel. The first question to arise is, "How much of this is original?" Historians agree that the exterior walls date from the chapel's beginning in the spring of 1780. However, the rumor that there was an earlier chapel near the drawbridge at Frederica continues to recur.

According to oral tradition the Methodists once worshipped in the old court house near the St. Jones River and Judge Samuel Dickinson turned them out because they were too noisy. If this were the case, they probably were Whitefield Methodists. None of the early circuit preachers mention this in their journals, although Francis Asbury reported that on August 8, 1779, he "rode to the drawbridge, (and) preached to about three hundred there."[1] Dr. E. G. Hallman, the late president of the Peninsula Conference Historical Society, and author of the only comprehensive conference history, maintains that by 1778 there was a log chapel built near the old drawbridge over the St. Jones River.[2] The editor of the *Epworth Herald* paid a visit to Barratt's in the spring of 1902. He remarked that the drawbridge referred to was over a branch of the "Murderkill, the little river upon the bank on which Frederica stands."[3] The early Methodists in Murderkill Hundred may have worshipped in a log barn near the present site of Barratt's.

Eighteenth century observers, though brief in their comments, were often complimentary when speaking of Barratt's Chapel. Bishop Francis Asbury for one seemed most impressed with the size of the building. He reported in his journal "... our house 42 by 48, was crowded above and below ... a heavy house to preach in ...."[4] In 1795, William Colbert, an early circuit rider, was impressed that Barratt's Chapel was built of brick.[5] It is amazing that a group of country folk with the Revolutionary War raging to the north and south of them would go so far beyond bare necessity in the construction of these exterior brick walls in a forest.

Nineteenth and twentieth century critics often made the mistake of judging the building by present day standards rather than by those of the eighteenth century.

Nineteenth century Methodists were often ambivalent in their attitude toward what they termed "that sacred place," Barratt's Chapel. John Lednum, an often quoted Methodist historian assigned to this circuit in 1825, had this to say:

> It was then, and for a number of years after, by far the grandest country chapel that the Methodists had in America. By the fall of this year (1780) it was enclosed, and had a ground floor, with rough seats and pulpit, ... It was not, however, finished till two generations passed away.[6]

In 1845, Thomas E. Bond, Senior Editor of the *Christian Advocate*, paid Barratt's a visit while on his way back to New York from the Annual Conference held in Milford, Delaware. He observed, "The house is of brick, and nearly square, with wide galleries on three sides. Its antique appearance consorted well with the historical reminiscences which the occasion called up."[7] It is interesting that when Barratt's was less than one-third its present age, it should be referred to as "antique" in appearance.

Abel Stevens, writing immediately after the Civil War, described Lednum as the best chronicler of these early times and then proceeded to quote him verbatim on the physical appearance of the Chapel.[8] Ten years later Bishop Matthew Simpson recalled that Barratt's had long been considered the best country chapel of the Methodists, although it was unfinished for two generations. He then made the first reference to the floor since Lednum's account and observed, "In November, 1780, the floor being laid and rough seats arranged, the first quarterly meeting was held in it, and it was supposed that nearly a thousand people were present."[9] In 1888, Scharf's *History of Delaware* bluntly stated:

> For the first sixty years of its existence the ground was the only flooring of the church, and the walls were left in an uncouth and primitive state. Yet, notwithstanding these inconveniences, the early fathers and mothers of the church in Israel never ceased to meet here and hold divine services.[10]

Harper's New Monthly Magazine in a more complimentary tone referred to Barratt's as " . . . a low roofed English-brick church."[11]

In 1911, the Honorable Norris S. Barratt, a great-great-great grandson of Phillip Barratt for whom the chapel was named and an understandably biased observer called it " . . . the grandest country chapel the Methodists had in America . . . ." Then he half apologetically admitted in the first really serious attempt to write a history of Barratt's Chapel that

> The unpretentious and modest building . . . is in striking contrast to the great majority of the splendid Gothic Methodist churches of today . . . . It was a greater undertaking and a matter of more importance to build a modest chapel in the midst of a forest in those days than for us to build the finest church edifice. The very plainness and colonial simplicity of Barratt's Chapel where there are no 'rich windows that exclude the light and passages that lead to nothing' points the moral that the life which it typifies . . . is that in which the best men have been nurtured . . . .[12]

There is a considerable difference of opinion on the quality of the brick construction. A Delaware artist visiting Barratt's Chapel recently pointed out that the brick walls compare very favorably with any found in Williamsburg. On the other hand a recent book about historic houses and buildings in Delaware states that Barratt's " . . . is a brick building plain as a pipe stem and without any architectural pretensions."[13]

A careful analysis of Barratt's Chapel reveals a structure with several types of brick work and two fronts. The west and south walls are laid in Flemish bond; the east and north in Liverpool bond with a slight variation to allow for working around the flat gauged brick arches over the doors and windows. The Flemish bond on the south wall is more elaborate with salt glazed headers.

The same author who found Barratt's "plain as a pipestem" observed concerning Woodburn, Delaware's gubernatorial mansion, that "the brickwork of the north and south front is laid in Flemish-bond; the walls of the ends are in Liverpool-bond, a common eighteenth-century manner of combination."[14] This is the same pattern that is found at Barratt's and thus refutes the often suggested idea that the variations in the brickwork resulted solely from inexperienced volunteer laborers.

The brickwork of Barratt's has two features not found elsewhere in Kent County buildings. The first is a series of "putlog holes" which were used for fastening scaffolding before the days of freestanding ironwork. "Putlog holes" are sometimes found in old English churches and some church architects suggest that their presence signifies that the church is never truly completed but continues to grow.[15] Some years ago the rumor started that these holes were for shooting at Indians and older visitors still ask about this. Since the holes do not go all the way through the wall and the local Indians were not hostile, this is most unlikely.

BARRATT'S CHAPEL SHOWING "PUTLOG HOLES" AND DIAPERING.
(Photograph by Holly Barrow.)

Worthy of mention is the belt course, two bricks in width extending around the chapel at the balcony level. This decorative feature found on a few of the eighteenth century Delaware homes is also repeated at the cornice level on the gable-end facade.

The second unusual feature is the "diapering" of the west gable. Three ornamental diamond shaped symbols appear here and are similar to designs introduced by Dutch masons who went to London to work on the restoration following the great fire of 1666. There is evidence of a fourth symbol which was removed when the gable window was inserted after the ceiling was plastered.

The brick wall around the cemetery also attracts considerable attention. Although it is not actually a part of the chapel, it joins the chapel at both ends. The wooden cap, placed over the wall to protect the lime mortar from dissolution appears in the earliest pictures. This feature, once rather common, is now so rare that it has drawn the attention of staff members of the Hopewell Village National Historic site.

EARLY POSTCARD SHOWING CEMETERY BRICK WALL WITH WOODEN CAP.

In the manner of Old Drawyers, north of Odessa and St. Anne's, south of Middletown, Barratt's Chapel has two fronts. Originally the main entrance was on the south flanked by two windows. This followed the custom of rural eighteenth century buildings. The fact that this wall is the most decorative, laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers, supports this theory.

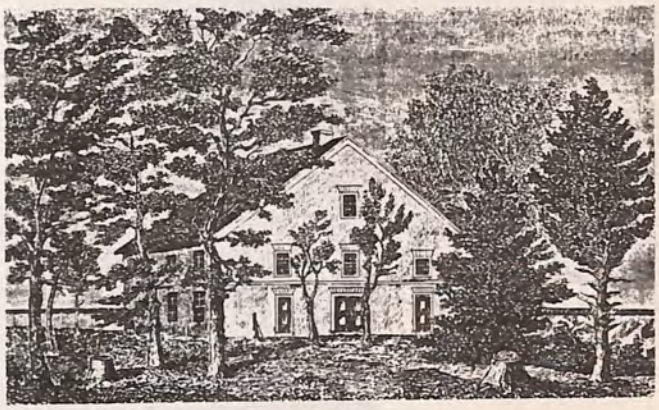
The west front has three bays also and is laid in Flemish bond but without glazed headers. The earliest known picture of the Chapel was drawn by Alfred T. Scott and used in the Reverend Andrew Manship's book. Manship, who said that he began his itinerancy at Barratt's in 1842, placed Scott's picture in his first book which was copyrighted in 1855. He explained, "I thought it would be very acceptable to my readers to give them a steel engraved view of the original Barratt's Chapel.[16] The young artist, Alfred Scott, no doubt, visited Barratt's with his father, Bishop Levi Scott, the first Methodist Episcopal bishop born in Delaware, and sketched the Chapel. Alfred was a local preacher and also taught art at the Wesleyan Female Collegiate Institute in Wilmington, Delaware.[17]

Scott's picture shows that the two outside doors leading into the galleries were once windows. These doors made it possible to enter the galleries without going into the ground floor of the chapel. A decade after the Civil War, when Bishop Matthew Simpson placed a picture of Barratt's in his *Cyclopedia*, the engraver simply took Scott's picture and added the outside doors to the galleries.[18] Probably shortly before the Civil War the changes were made to accommodate the changing relationship between the white and black members of the congregation. This is the way the Reverend W.W.W. Wilson, pastor of the Frederica Methodist Church in 1885, explains the pictures:

At first there was but one front entrance, the gallery being reached by a flight of stairs on either side of it, which was guarded by banisters and open to the main audience room. But owing to the colored people and others crowding down out of the gallery when the lower congregation would be making its exit, these flights of stairs were removed and the two lower front windows were taken out and doors inserted in their place, so that the gallery might be entered and vacated by means of them.[19]

ALFRED T. SCOTT'S SKETCH OF BARRATT'S CHAPEL, 1855.

*(Manship's **Thirteen Years in the Itinernancy.**)*



SCOTT'S PICTURE WITH DOORS ADDED, 1876.

*(Simpson's **Cyclopaedia of Methodism.**)*

Visitors entering the chapel are even more curious about how much of the interior is original. Thomas E. Bond, immediately after his visit in 1845, editorialized:

> The walls remain as they were built, though the interior has been considerably repaired and altered. The pulpit, especially, has been modernized, being low and wide, with a long seat in it, made of the very board upon which Mr. Asbury and Dr. Coke sat . . . .[20]

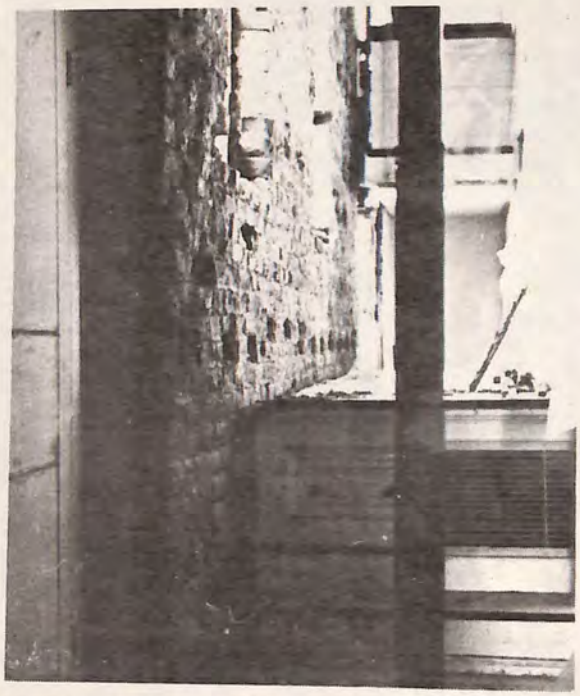
Dr. Bond's visit was sixty-one years after Coke and Asbury first met at Barratt's. During this visit he met two people who vividly remembered that meeting, Judge Isaac Davis of Smyrna and a Mrs. Layton of Milford. His editorial contained the first published reference to the high pulpit which was one of the often debated issues regarding the building.[21]

Scharf's *History of Delaware* which was published in 1888 had been the earliest specific reference prior to the recent discovery of Bond's editorial. Scharf described the church thus:

> The old fashioned high pulpit, which was reached by a flight of steps and which almost concealed the preacher from the congregation had been remodeled to suit modern ideas; but the seat or wooden bench, upon which Bishop Coke and Asbury, and other pioneers of the church, sat, is still preserved as a memento.[22]

This was written over 100 years after the erection of the building and since no eighteenth century commentators were found who had mentioned the high pulpit, there has been the tendency to discredit the idea and to claim that the present pulpit, which is higher than those usually found in the average country church, was original. A newspaper report on the anniversary service of 1900 also affirmed the high pulpit, but it appeared to be a quote from Scharf.

In 1973, when the damaged east wall was being restored, architects reported, "No supports for the 'high pulpit' were found to have been built into or inserted in the masonry."[23] This seemed to settle the argument until in the spring of 1983, when the 1845 *Christian Advocate* article about Dr. Bond's visit was discovered at the Drew Archives Center. The photographs and sketches of the 1983 restoration were reexamined. Although the wooden supports had disappeared, there was a perfect pattern of holes in the wall called voids, which outlined the steps leading to a platform and an outline for the pulpit paneling. In the picture of the drawings of the restoration, the pattern can be seen.[24]



PICTURE OF NORTHEAST WALL DURING 1973 RESTORATION. *(McCune Associates.)*

In the summer of 1983, a small newspaper was discovered with the title, *Barratt's Chapel Centenary,* published September 10, 1884, by the Reverend S. N. Pilchard, pastor of the Magnolia circuit, which included Barratt's, containing an article under the title, "The Future of Barratt's Chapel." The author of the article made a strong plea to have the chapel restored to what he termed its "former quaint style of furniture and surroundings." He then posed the question, "Why not have the pulpit as it used to be, so high as to almost shut the preacher from the congregation' Why not refurnish it as it originally was?"[25]

In the fall of 1983 an article in the February 2, 1884 issue of the *Conference Worker,* "The Frederica Church in 1884," was found. The Reverend W.W.W. Wilson gave more detail on what Barratt's was like originally than any previous observer. He remarked:

> Originally, we are told, the pulpit consisted of a paneled box, nearly square, which stood about 12 or 18 inches above the present platform and occupied about one third of its space. It had no altar or railing, and but one entrance, which was in front on the left, or ladies' side, as you face it. The original bench which was occupied by Coke and Asbury is still used in the pulpit.[26]

The foregoing research proves conclusively that in the early period there was a high pulpit where the present pulpit stands.

After the Revolutionary War, the Methodists moved farther from their Anglican and High Church heritage. The movement to eliminate the old style pulpit to bring the preacher closer to the congregation was part of the revival movement known as the Second Great Awakening. At the Dover, Delaware, Methodist Church, changing of the pulpit and seating arrangements was part of the preparation for their first planned revival meeting which may have been the first in the nation. Immediately after the 1800 Annual Conference which was held in Smyrna, a spontaneous revival erupted bringing in over 100 new members. Two laymen, Governor Richard Bassett and Dr. Abraham Ridgely requested that a week long meeting be planned in Dover for the following May. At the September meeting of the trustees preceding the revival planned for May of 1801, they passed the following resolution:

> . . . that the old pulpit be taken away and a new one made according to the directions hereafter by the Trustees. Also that the Isle (sic) go from the front door to the pulpit through the centre of House, and the benches fixed on each side thereof in the most convenient manner, and the stove or stoves be fixed in said Isle in the most convenient place or places.[27]

By February, it was obvious that there was not enough money to pay for all the improvements. The trustees still found that it was "necessary to pull down the present pulpit and erect another more eligible" and found John Wiltbank, a local preacher, willing to do the work now and wait for his pay until after the collection had been taken at the special May meeting. Their conclusion was, "Resolved that the present pulpit shall be immediately taken down and the said Wiltbank . . . proceed to build and put up under the directions of the trustees another pulpit."[28] Regrettably the minutes of the trustees of Barratt's are not as detailed as those at Dover. Something similar to this happened shortly thereafter at Barratt's for the same reasons.

The new kind of evangelism demanded new facilities. The question of when the pulpit was lowered arises again. Lillian Postles Miller, a native of Frederica, who was descended from several prominent chapel families, writing a speech about Barratt's for a ladies' group in 1952, said, "The original pulpit was very high, similar to those found in some Anglican churches at the time, but it has been removed. The seat along the back for those conducting services is still the original one."[29] Her daughter, Dr. Mary Emily Miller, said that the present pulpit "was not installed until 1832."[30] She could not remember where she obtained the information, but reported that she had used some old Frederica manuscripts which she borrowed from a local resident. These papers seemed to have disappeared after his death.

The Reverend W.W.W. Wilson, pastor at Frederica, speaking during the centennial year of the changes to the building noted:

> The above mentioned changes which some historians improperly call the finishing of the Chapel were mostly made in 1841, during the pastorate of Rev. William Connelly, who, by the way, was a mechanical genius, a memento of whose skill in the use of tools may be seen in the shapely and well formed wooden chandelier which is still used at the Chapel. He is also said to have planned its pulpit and even to have built the carriage with which he rode the circuit, and to have made a suit of walnut furniture that graced his home.[31]

CHANDELIER BY THE REVEREND WILLIAM CONNELLY.

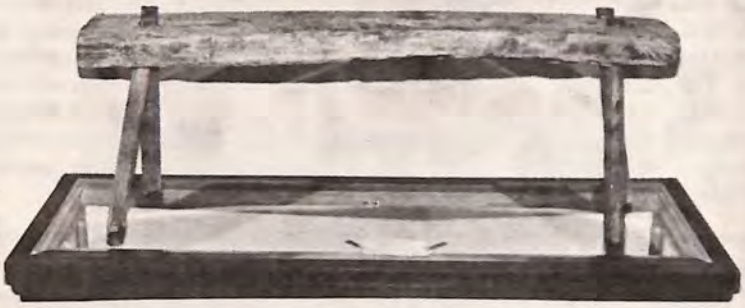
(Barratt's Museum. Photograph by Everett Bryan.)

In 1841, the minutes of Barratt's trustees show that $700 was raised for improvements on the Chapel.

Connelly is credited with building Conley's Chapel in Sussex County in 1838 which still bears his name although the spelling has been changed. They refer to him as a carpenter by trade.[32] In 1842, he is credited with building another church on this circuit about two miles west of Magnolia, known as Banning's. The report is that he did most of the construction work.[33] This same year Purnell's Chapel near Felton was enlarged and most of this work is also attributed to him.[34] Upon finishing Purnell's, he moved to Denton, Maryland, in 1843 and died the following year at age fifty, perhaps from overwork![35] Therefore, in all probability the present pulpit and altar arrangement was constructed by Connelly in 1841 since his time would have been occupied building the other two churches in 1842. He was on this circuit only two years, 1841 and 1842. Bond's editorial in 1845 mentioned that the pulpit had been lowered and a long bench had been placed along the wall.

The discovery of the origin of the long bench behind the pulpit at first posed some problems. It had been one of the strongest arguments to support the opinion that the present pulpit is the original one. John Wesley, in his advice for building, said, "Let there be no Chinese paling and no tub pulpit, but a square projection with a long seat behind. Let there be no pews, and no backs to the seats."[36] Since the bench is almost twelve feet long and has no back, it fits Wesley's prescription exactly. This is the only church which is known to follow so closely Wesley's orders. Since Barratt's was built eleven years before the death of Wesley, the long bench indicated the originality of the present pulpit arrangement.

A further problem created by Dr. Bond's revelation that the long seat in the pulpit was made of the "very board" upon which Mr. Asbury and Dr. Coke sat after their first meeting was the fact that encased in the museum collection is a very primitive forty-three inch long bench which for several generations has been revered as the seat upon which Coke and Asbury sat.



BENCH ON WHICH ASBURY AND COKE SAT. *(Barratt's Museum. Photograph by Everett Bryan.)*

However, Wilson's 1884 article agreed with Dr. Bond's 1845 editorial when he noted:

> The original bench which was occupied by Coke and Asbury is still used in the pulpit. The other benches which consisted of plain slabs, without backs and supported by legs inserted into them, have with one exception, entirely disappeared. That bench or piece of one, is now preserved as a relic.[37]

Thus, perhaps our well preserved glass encased bench in the museum is part of one original backless pew and not the pulpit bench. A Delaware builder who has had considerable experience in restoration work using eighteenth century tools and methods believes that the preserved bench was the first one made and that it was used in the construction of the rest of the pews. The two round holes in its center he believes were to hold the legs for the benches as they were being shaped with a small hatchet and drawing knife. This explanation accounts for the chop marks on top of the bench. He also believes that it was preserved as a symbol and that when Coke and Asbury visited here four years later, it was pointed out to them and that they sat on it as a means of identifying with the builders.

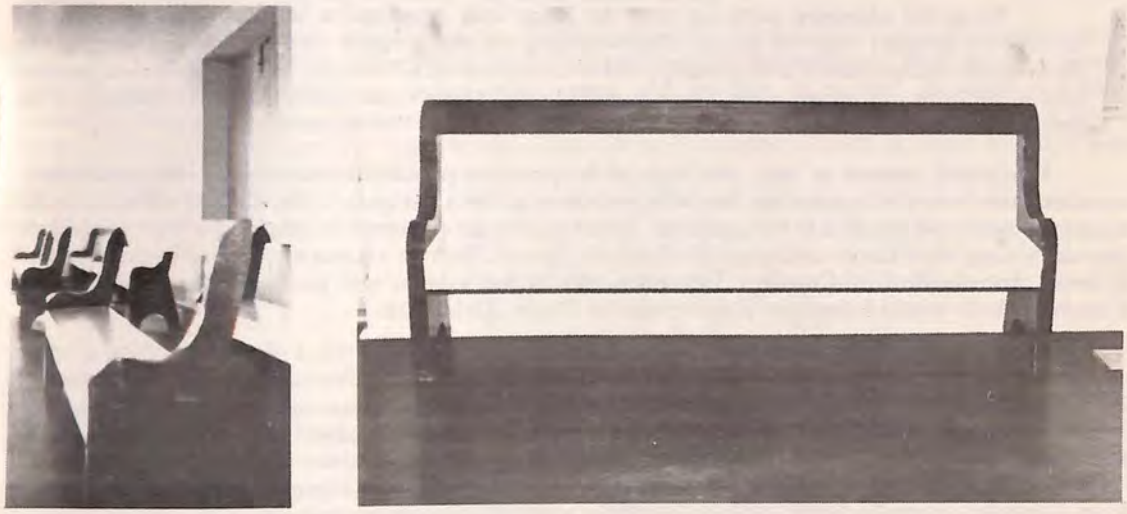
By the middle of the nineteenth century vague references to the seating of the congregation begin to appear. In the Barratt's Chapel Museum there is a family chair donated by Mrs. Elneta Russell Grier which was reported to have been used in the Chapel in 1780. This has led some to believe that at first the members brought their seats with them each time that they came to church.[38] However, Captain James Grier, the first of the Grier family in America, did not arrive until 1815 when he ran away from his Scottish home at age fifteen.[39] He did not become a trustee of Barratt's until 1851.[40] Mrs. Grier's grandfather, Elias Russell did not become a trustee until 1867.[41]

The minutes of the trustees for the Dover Church shed some light on the possible purpose of this chair. The following was reported at a meeting held on May 9, 1808:

> Resolved unanimously that each of the trustees of Wesley church purchase or procure a chair to be placed within the altar, and that at all times when public worship is performed said trustees shall take their seats within the same, for the express purpose of keeping order during public worship and encouraging and regulating, as far as possible, the singing in said church.[42]

Since both Mr. Grier and Mr. Russell were mid-nineteenth century trustees, this may be the proper explanation of their Barratt's chair.

While at the very beginning people may have stood or brought a seat, in a short time simple benches with no back like the one in the museum were made. The present pews are very plain with mortised and splayed construction which wedges the ends and middle supports and thus requires few nails and no glue. They also have a single small rail as a back support. One of these benches is marked on the bottom, "Made by Jas. G. Harrison, Oct. 19th, 1826."



1826 PEWS AT BARRATT'S CHAPEL. END VIEW SHOWS MORTISED AND SPLAYED CONSTRUCTION. *(Photographs by Everett Bryan and Donald Barrow.)*

"Is this the original floor?" tourists often ask. To answer the question guides must turn to the histories. What appears to be the first reference to the floor in Barratt's Chapel is found in Lednum's history:

> In March, 1780, Messrs. Philip Barratt and Waitman Sipple took the lead in erecting Barratt's Chapel. It is 42 by 28 feet, built of bricks, two stories high and had a vestry room connected with it . . . . By the fall of this year it was enclosed, and had a ground floor, with rough seats and pulpit, and was occupied as a place of worship. It was not, however, finished till two generations passed away. In November of this year the first Quarterly Meeting was held in it.[43]

The next reference to the unfinished condition of the chapel is found about twenty years after Lednum's report in Bishop Simpson's *Cyclopedia*. He did not connect the unfinished condition with the floor but with the building itself.[44] The earliest positive reference to a dirt floor came twelve years after Simpson and more than a hundred years after the building was erected. Scharf, who seemed to be quoting Lednum said, "For the first sixty years of its existence the ground was the only flooring of the church, and the walls were left in an uncouth and primitive state."[45] Newspapers reporting anniversary services repeated Scharf's statement and passed the idea along. Recently some historians taking a second look at Lednum's wording, " . . . By the fall of this year it was enclosed, and had a ground floor, . . . " have interpreted those words to mean a floor at ground level.[46] They contend that the reference to the unfinished condition applied to the second floor level, the galleries which extend on three sides.

There is some evidence that the floor of the galleries was not finished when the chapel was opened. The Reverend Benjamin Abbott of New Jersey, while visiting Francis Asbury at Dr. Thomas White's home was invited to exhort at Barratt's at the Quarterly Conference held in the fall of 1782 which was two years after the chapel was opened for services. He reported:

> Seeing the people sit on the joists upstairs, I was afraid they would fall through, this caused me to withhold; I quitted the pulpit, and there was an exhortation or two given, and the meeting broke up.[47]

Whether this refers to attic or gallery joists is not clear. In 1857, the Reverend W.E. England reporting on the death of Mary Lockwood Simmons, aged 87, said that when Mrs. Simmons was a young girl, the sleepers were used for seats.[48] Dr. Mary Burton Derrickson McCurdy, in an article written for the Historical Society of Delaware, concluded:

> From the obituary we learn that the floor was incomplete at that time, but that the uncovered sleepers were in place. The building of the church was carried out during the Revolution and probably took several years to complete in all details. In the unfinished portion where the floor was incomplete, some people, as did Mary Lockwood, sat on the sleepers. This practice would naturally cause the earth to become packed like an earthen floor.[49]

While this seemed to Mrs. McCurdy to be positive proof that provisions were made for a wooden floor from the beginning, this interpretation ignores the possibility that the reference to the sleepers could have applied to the galleries. There is also no evidence in England's letter to indicate that the young Mary Lockwood attended Barratt's Chapel. Barratt's is not mentioned in the letter and it states that she died in Camden, Delaware. Her father's farm was near the almshouse west of Camden which would have been much closer to Dover, Delaware.

While a plausible case can be built for believing there was not a dirt floor, there is other evidence to indicate the reverse. In April of 1814, when replacing a deceased sexton, the trustees of Barratt's Chapel offered to pay Jacob Herrington six dollars for "cleaning and sanding the house" for the remainder of the year.[50] Shortly after this the chapel on Smith Island had a "whitewashed wall and cleanly sanded floor."[51] Of Wesley Chapel, the first preaching house in New York, it was said, "The floor was sprinkled over with sand, as white as snow."[52] The Reverend O.N. Gray, a minister from Kingston, Jamaica, West Indies, asserts that some of the country mountain chapels still have a dirt floor and clean sand is occasionally sprinkled over the floor.[53] Others believe that sand was used as a cleaning agent on wood floors in the eighteenth century much like sawdust was used in the twentieth century.[54]

Some features of the building itself suggest the possibility of either a dirt of brick floor when the chapel was built. The fact that the windows are about three feet above the ground instead of four feet or more indicates the original floor was at ground level. The later removal of bricks to create three small air holes in the north wall to provide some circulation, and the newer bricks found under the west door sill all add credence to the idea that the original floor was of dirt or brick. Mr. Henry Magaziner of the National Park Service suggests that eighteenth century churches without a basement often had brick floors for good reason. Brick floors wore better, solved the problem of dry rot which plagued wooden floors, and reduced the fire hazard from the use of charcoal foot warmers.[55]

The present wooden floor was installed in 1933 when nearly $800 was spent on improvements. W.E. Habbart, District Superintendent, reported to the Conference in 1933, "A new floor and the gallery which was so decayed that it was not safe to go up into it has been repaired, and a new lighting system installed, and the interior repainted at a cost of between seven and eight hundred dollars."[56]

Mrs. Lillian P. Miller writing about the floor twenty years later noted:

> Some people claimed that there was a packed earthen floor at first. It has been decided that this was not the case, because when termites got into the floor and a new one had to be laid, there was no evidence that the building had ever been without a floor.[57]

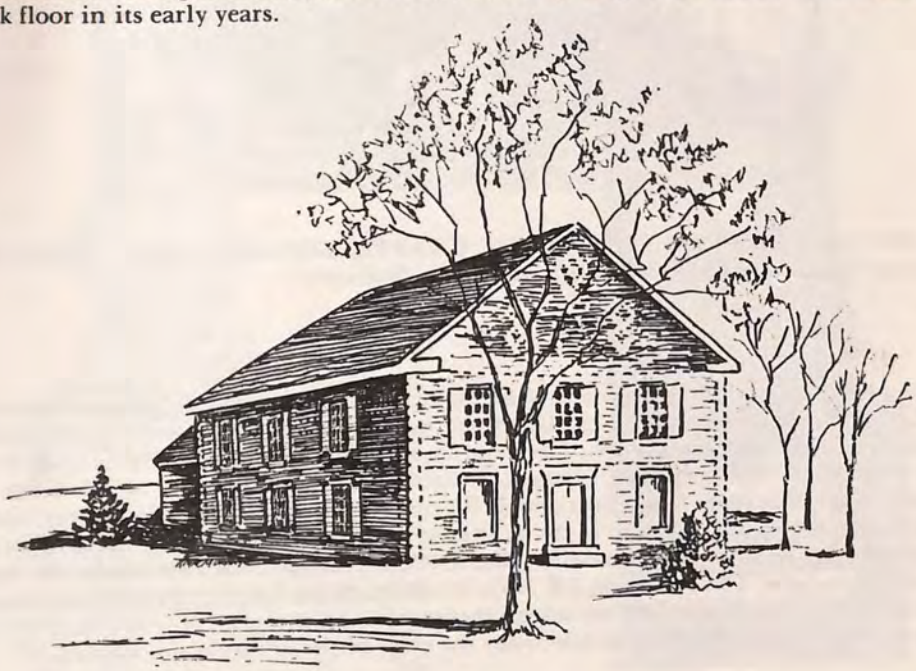
In 1933, R.J. Russell, a trustee of Barratt's wrote to The Reverend Milton Andrews, "Wish you could see the floor, looks fine."[58] Because the present wooden floor is so near ground level, sometime in the past, the ground undernearth the church was dug out from six to twelve inches in depth. This destroyed any positive evidence regarding whether the Chapel had a dirt or brick floor.

The Reverend W.W.W. Wilson in 1884 admitted that this was an area of the building about which he was uncertain. He explained it thus:

> The supposition that there was originally a ground or brick floor is questionable, though there was such in the vestry made of bats and bricks left over from the building, but that the floor used to be sanded in keeping with the custom of the time, is indisputable, as the original Record of the Trustees, now in the custody of James Grier, the present owner and occupant of the Old Homestead of Judge Barratt fully shows.[59]

If inferior bricks were used in the floor of the secondary building, it seems only logical that better bricks were used on the floor of the main building. The sanding of the chapel could have referred to filling the cracks between the bricks as the sand settled down.

On the evidence now available it may be concluded that when Barratt's was first built, it had a brick floor. In the days before the use of stoves that type of floor would have been the most energy efficient making the building cooler in summer and warmer in winter. At least one other contemporary Methodist church on the Delmarva Peninsula, Dudley's Chapel, had brick in the aisles and vestibule during this time period. Also, Christ Episcopal Church in Dover is said to have had a brick floor in its early years.



VESTRY ROOM AS DESCRIBED BY W.W.W WILSON.
(Sketch by Karen E. MacMurray.)

The vestry room is a clear indication of the connection between the Church of England and early Delaware Methodists. Dr. William H. Williams in his recent book on Peninsula Methodism observed:

> Interestingly enough, along with White's Chapel near Whiteleysburg, Ken. Co., Del. and Dudley's Chapel near Sudlersville, Queen Anne's Co., Md. Barratt's Chapel had a vestry room. The presence of the vestry room is further testimony to Peninsula Methodism's close ties with Anglicanism.[60]

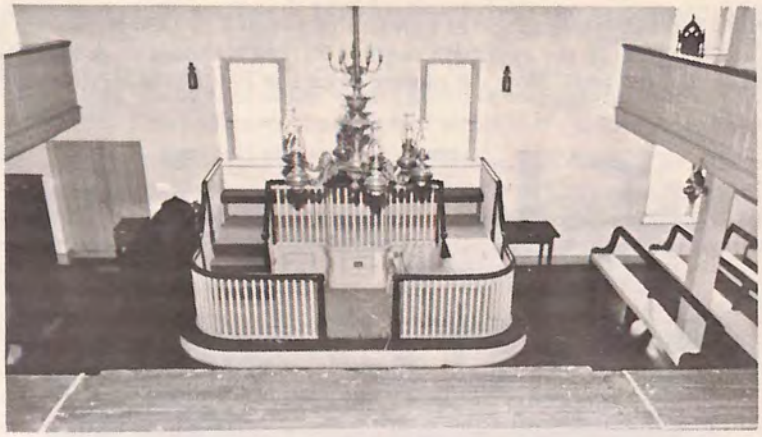
John Lednum was the first to mention the vestry. He simply said, " . . . and had a vestry room connected with it." Scharf said the same but not until Wilson's article was recently discovered was serious consideration given to the idea. Wilson was more explicit when he said:

> There was also a vestry in the rear of the Chapel on the northeast corner of about 10 X 12 feet which was probably built in imitation of, and intended to be used as Episcopal vestries at first, but it was afterward appropriated to the use of women, who with troublesome children could repair to it during the public service and at one time it was even occupied by a family.[61]

The vestry was probably used as a meeting place for the trustees in the early years. In 1831, the trustees started meeting in members' homes in Frederica. This may have been during the time that the vestry was occupied by a family, probably the sexton's. Eventually the vestry room was torn down and by the turn of the century a small frame storage building for coal and tools took its place.

TURN-OF-THE-CENTURY PICTURE OF CHAPEL SHOWING COAL SHED IN REAR. *(Division of Cultural and Historical Affairs, Dover, Delaware.)*

Some believe that there was no heat in the church until 1826 when the trustees ordered the first stoves. Alfred T. Scott's sketch shown earlier refutes that idea. This picture reveals several things that might otherwise have not been known. The large chimney on the peak of the roof near the west end indicates a fireplace. Edith Barratt Lenssen, daughter of Norris Barratt, recalled her father or grandfather saying that there had been a double fireplace where the edge of the gallery intersects the aisle.[62] The top rail of the balcony is cut at that spot at the correct width for a large chimney. Although churches do not usually have fireplaces, Wesley Chapel, the first Methodist building in New York City had one. The Reverend J.B. Wakeley maintained that they wanted it to appear to be a private dwelling so that they might not offend the established church.[63] Whether Barratt's fireplace was built for this reason or simply to take away the chill of the winter is not known.



BALCONY RAIL SHOWING INSERT WHERE FIREPLACE WAS ORIGINALLY LOCATED. *(Photograph by Donald Barrow.)*

After 1826, the trustees of Barratt's Chapel purchased two wood burning stoves. An entry in the trustees' record book indicates that one of the sexton's jobs was to cut the dead trees in the grove for firewood. Sometime after the Civil War, the coal stoves which are now in the Chapel were purchased and used for many years until the furnace was placed under the pulpit. The stoves were manufactured by Isaac A. Sheppard and Company, Baltimore, Maryland. Mr. Sheppard's Baltimore plant was opened in 1866. The stoves in the Chapel, Vulcan #24 model, weighed 275 pounds and although they were purchased much earlier, they were still being listed in 1931 and were selling for $45.50 at that time. See the picture taken from the sale catalog.[64]

Vulcan
Egg

FOR HARD OR SOFT COAL

WITH DRAW-CENTER GRATE

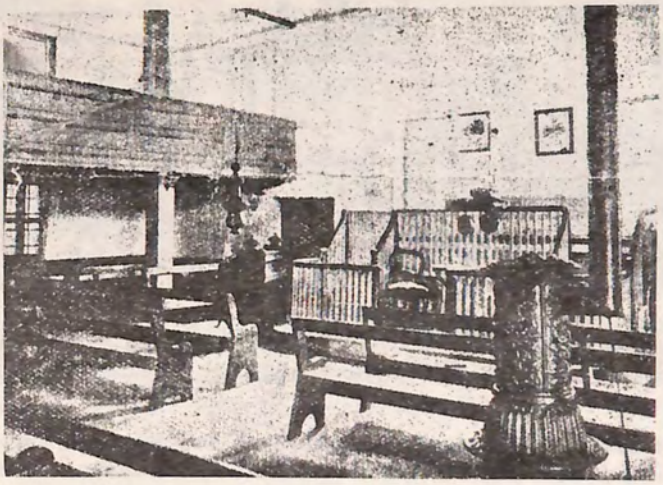
Entirely re-modeled, with large Square Ash Pit, Draw Center Grate, Clinker Door and Handsome Skirt Base. Heavy Fender Ring included in price. Gas burning appliance makes combustion perfect.

No.	Shipping Weight	Diameter Firepot	Depth Firepot	Height Stove	Height to Pipe Collar	Size Pipe	List Prices
20	165	12½"	15½"	47½"	44"	4½"	$28.00
22	200	15"	18"	52"	46½"	6"	35.50
24	275	17"	21½"	57"	51"	6"	45.50

PAGE FROM CATALOG SHOWING STOVE SIMILAR TO THOSE IN BARRATT'S.

BARRATT'S CHAPEL STOVE. *(Photograph by Everett Bryan.)*

The earliest interior photograph of Barratt's published in 1896 shows the use of a coal stove and thus indicates that before the twentieth century Barratt's shifted from heating the chapel with wood to the use of coal for heat. Note the picture from the *Peninsula Methodist.*[65]



1894 INTERIOR VIEW OF BARRATT'S CHAPEL.

One of the major problems faced by the trustees in preserving the Chapel for 200 years was keeping it in good physical condition. The water stains seen in this picture indicate that they did not always succeed.

1911 INTERIOR VIEW OF BARRATT'S CHAPEL.
(Cummings Photo, Wilmington, Del.)

The minutes of the trustees indicate that in 1820 Andrew Barratt was appointed to head a committee to "hire carpenters to put on a new roof and repair said chapel."[66] Norris Barratt said that Andrew Barratt took a lively interest in all that appertained to the chapel upon which he expended $1,000 after the death of his father.[67] The roof alone would not have cost the full amount. However, a list of other repairs is not given. This indicates that the first wood shingle roof lasted forty years.

In 1867, the trustees decided to repair the roof, windows and doors. The patched roof must not have proved to be satisfactory for in the spring of 1870 the subject of a new roof was discussed. Although they agreed that it was needed, it was not until the summer of 1871 that shingles were purchased and carpenters employed.[68] This second roof, with repairs, was used fifty-one years, an unusually long time.

1936 HABS PHOTOGRAPH OF BARRATT'S. *(Library of Congress.)*

Nearly fifty years later the water stains on the ceiling of the 1911 picture indicate that a new shingle roof which cost $166 in 1910 had been needed for some time.[69] In 1932, considerable repairs were made to the Chapel including a new floor. R.J. Russell proudly reported in the spring of 1933, the Chapel was "all finished even the roof painted."[70] A picture of the Chapel in the 1936 HABS records shows a metal roof on the Chapel.[71] This indicates that the first twentieth century wood shingle roof did not last as long as those of the eighteenth and nineteenth century. In the early years carpenters used the harder heart of the tree for lumber and burned the sap wood for fuel. Since the larger trees of the forest had been harvested, they were later forced to use the smaller ones with softer wood. Thus the lumber did not last as long. After a few years a metal roof was placed over the decaying shingles. This was unsatisfactory and an asphalt shingle roof which shows in this picture was placed on the Chapel.

ASPHALT ROOF ON CHAPEL. *(Cover on 1971 **Methodist History**.)*

A wood shingle roof was put on in 1973 when the last attempt was made to restore Barratt's to its original condition. Thus in 204 years Barratt's Chapel has had seven roofs.

In the early period a bricked well was placed a few yards from the northwest corner of the church. After a few years the well was covered and a wooden pump was placed there. Sometime before the twentieth century a roof was placed over the well and a trough placed along the side of the pump house for watering the many horses that brought the worshipers to Barratt's for anniversary services and other special events. Nineteenth century visitors often mentioned a large number of teams with horses being tied to every tree.

Mrs. Evelyn Culver, a long time friend and visitor to Barratt's Chapel, recalls the days when as a young girl her great-grandmother, Mary Ann Hall, would pull her and her sister in an express wagon the long mile from Frederica to Barratt's. She also remembers the many horses tied in the grove:

> Many times the horses would get raring or spooked by a bee or dog and the noise and commotion could be heard inside. The hired men would leave by the same side front entrance and get the horses settled. Many times there would be considerable damage to a carriage or rig.[72]

When people brought a picnic lunch and stayed for an all day celebration the many horses had to be watered. Hired hands and teenage boys no doubt took turns in pumping the water that filled the trough for the animals. To protect them from the rain and sun a board roof was placed over the pump. When Lefferts took this picture before 1909 a couple boards were missing. Whether this was due to deterioration or an effort to provide solar heat for the water is a moot question.

PUMP HOUSE AT BARRATT'S CHAPEL. *(Lefferts)*

The earliest dated photograph of Barratt's not only reveals the pumphouse but also fodder to feed the horses stacked so high that a ladder was necessary. This picture was given by Norris Barratt to the Sons of Delaware in 1894.[74]

Behind the chapel and to the west was a shed. In 1952, Mrs. Lillian P. Miller recalled, "There were some stalls for horses in the back which have since been torn down."[75] Thirty years later Mrs. Culver noted a different use for them, "to keep carriages dry when storms came up in summer."[76]

Another small building project was begun in the fall of 1872 and it reflects the rising Victorian prudishness. "A building committee was appointed to put up two new private houses, one for the accommodation of the ladies, the other for gentlemen."[77] Until the latter half of the nineteenth century one seemed to have been adequate for both the sexes.

EARLIEST DATED PHOTOGRAPH OF BARRATT'S CHAPEL. *(Presented to the Sons of Delaware by Norris S. Barratt, 1894.)*

In 1894, a small Victorian style storage house was built in the cemetery similar to the one found at the Silver Lake Cemetery in Dover.[78] This picture of an early block print of Barratt's Chapel includes its outline.

EARLY BLOCK PRINTED OF BARRATT'S. *(Block Print donated from the estate of Mary E. Palmer Johnson, Magnolia, Delaware.)*

In addition to providing for the upkeep of the chapel and its cluster of small supporting buildings, the trustees eventually found it necessary to provide a home for the sexton even though there was never a parsonage on the premises. As the cemetery grew, the work of the sexton greatly increased and the advantage of having a full time sexton on the premises became apparent. The vestry room served this purpose until more land with a tenant house on it was acquired. This was used for many years. In the twentieth century the word sexton was dropped and the title of caretaker of the cemetery took its place.

For many years a house which stood on the hill to the north of the present caretaker's home provided shelter for the caretaker and his family. The steps still remain. In 1952, a bungalow was built on its present location.

In 1957, the Reverend William O. Hackett became chairman of the Conference Historical Society. He projected and carried to completion the development of the museum and curator's residence. Ground was broken for this last major new building November 10, 1963. The present brick museum and curator's residence were completed and the museum was officially opened to the public on October 25, 1964, with the Reverend Paul E. Reynolds as curator. The early plans called for this buillding to be connected to the chapel. However, more mature judgment prevailed and once again the integrity of the building was maintained.

MUSEUM AND CURATOR'S RESIDENCE. *(Photograph by Everett Bryan.)*