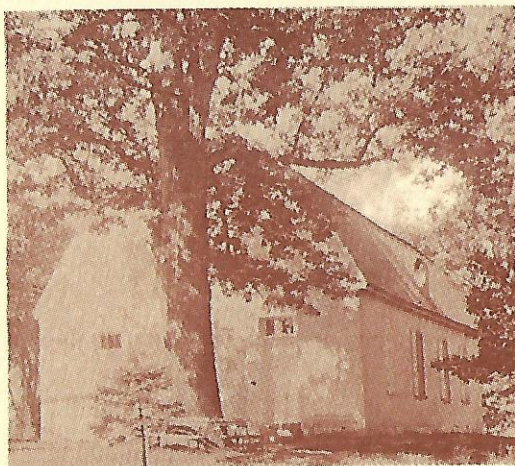
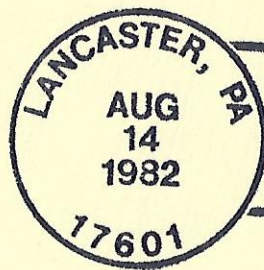




THE DONEGAL CHURCH and WITNESS TREE

Prepared by
MOUNT JOY STAMP CLUB



JOYPEX 82
STATION

International Peace Garden

BRIEF HISTORY OF DONEGAL CHURCH

Donegal Presbyterian Church, one of the oldest churches in Lancaster County, was founded by Scotch-Irish settlers from County Donegal, Ireland. Although their emigration into this area began as early as 1714, the church dates its founding to 1721 when the earliest petition to the Presbytery for a supply minister was recorded.

The first full-time pastor was the Rev. James Anderson who was installed in 1727 and served the church and community until his death in 1740. The present stone church building was probably built around 1730, replacing the early small log meeting-house.

In the summer of 1777, when General Howe's British army moved to invade Pennsylvania, Colonel Lowrey and the men of his battalion who had assembled for worship at Donegal, were summoned to battle. It is said that the whole congregation gathered around the large oak tree standing at the front of the church, and with hands joined, they vowed allegiance to the cause of the patriots. Hence the name "Witness Tree" has been given to this 300 to 400 year old white oak which is one of many virgin oaks in the four acre grove surrounding the church.

The Donegal Spring, also on the premises, was a necessity and convenience in the early years when two services were sometimes held on the Sabbath and many members came long distances on horseback.

Despite its history, the glory of Donegal is not as a shrine, but as a living, growing church where the gospel of Jesus Christ is being preached.