

THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
in
CANDIA, NEW HAMPSHIRE



THE CHURCH ON THE HILL
FOR 250 YEARS 1771 – 2021
Diane Philbrick Jan. 17, 2021

INTRODUCTION

Visitors to Candia often can be seen photographing our church. Surely our church on the hill represents the quintessential New Hampshire setting, the classic architecture, white with black shutters, a bell in the belfry, massive granite steps, cut stone foundation, a cemetery very visible behind the church with slate stones commemorating early settlers. The church's surroundings continue to display the idyllic town: original schoolhouse and Grange Hall, first town library, soldier's monument, 19th century homes, one that is the town museum, another now a charming bed and breakfast. No wonder visitors try to photograph and capture the image. What impression do they have of us who are so blessed to call this home? Do they see the church as a vestige of an old fashioned, outdated lifestyle? Are they curious about the people who frequent this place and so carefully maintain it? We, those frequenters and maintainers, are now standing together at our 250th anniversary of God's church in Candia. This document is written with awesome respect for those who have come before us to build a continuous community of faith. We are confident that we are called at present to be God's people in this community and have the assurance that our church is destined to a vibrant future. Oh, that the photograph the visitor took of the outside of our church could convey the faithful life of God's people on the inside!

Here we are in the year 2021, in a culture of instant gratification and self orientation. We are looking back over the last 250 years seeking understanding of the present and celebrating those who have come before. A history of the church was written at its Centennial celebration by James Hill Fitts and at its bicentennial celebration by Paul Sargent. It is an appropriate time to review the record of our past and bring the narrative to the present.

*One generation will commend your works to another
they will tell of your mighty acts,
They will speak of the glorious splendor of your majesty...
They will celebrate your abundant goodness
and joyfully sing of your righteousness. Ps. 145:4-7*

FOUNDATIONAL YEARS

The roots of the Candia Congregational Church begin when New Hampshire was a British colony ruled by a governor appointed by King George I of England. To become a church we had to first become a town - or what was at the time called a parish, a district with its own church. The story of becoming a town is worth the telling.

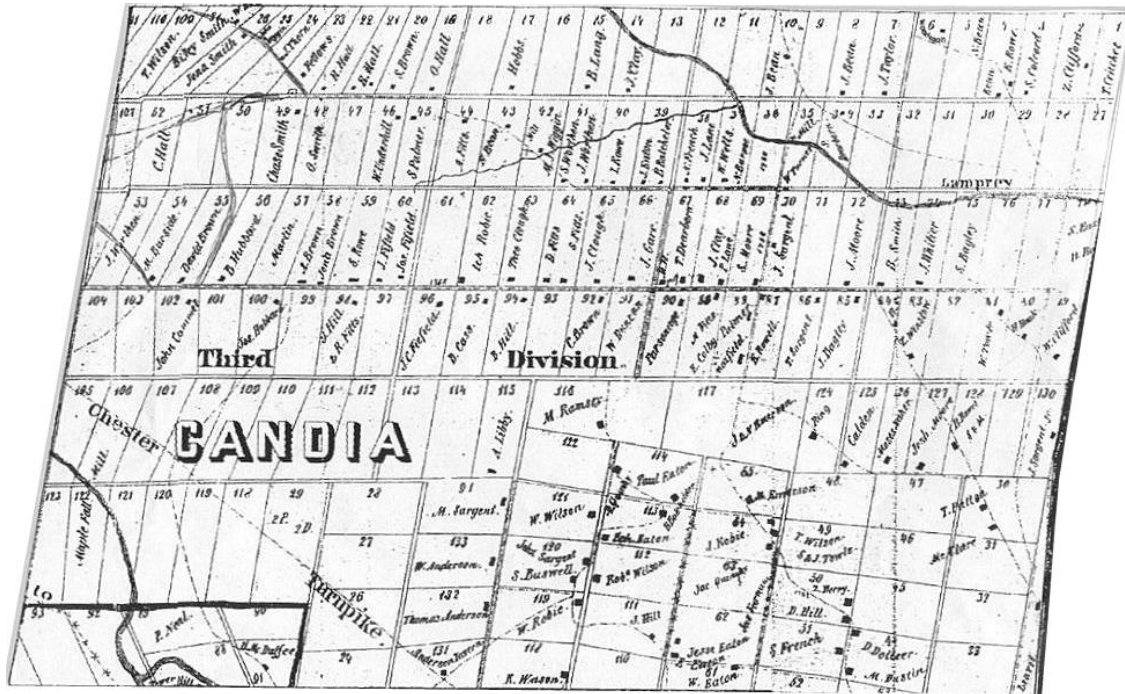
The geography we call Candia was initially part of the land grant issued in 1722 by “*His Excellency Samuel Shute, Esq. Captain General and Commander in Chief in and over His Majesty’s Province of New Hampshire*” (Chase, 7) What a title! The seacoast by this time was substantially settled and entrepreneurs saw the potential for future development to the west. A group of men from Hampton and Portsmouth who called themselves the Society for the Settling of the Chestnut Country petitioned the governor for a land grant. Their first intent was to determine boundaries of this wilderness area, in order to lay out their new settlement. “*We begun at a Marked white pine Tree Standing on the Supposed Kingston line, where Haverhill Supposed Line Cutts it, and run Ten miles upon a W.N.W. Line to a pitch pine Tree notcht on four Sides; then....*” (Chase, 9) The description continues to designate a line from the first mentioned pine tree, three miles to a hemlock, giving the Society two sides to the grant. The other two grant boundaries were to be parallel to the first two. As a consequence of this survey, comical and ludicrous to contemporary readers, Chestnut Country was determined.

Having supposedly established the territory boundaries, the next step was to again petition Governor Shute, this time for a town charter that was signed by one hundred proprietors. Each proprietor would receive equal shares of land. However, reserved from the total was a share for a parsonage, a share for the first minister of the Gospel and a third for the benefit of a school. Incidentally, Governor Schute also claimed 500 acres for himself. According to the charter, every proprietor was required to build a house and clear and plant three acres within 4 years. The proprietors were also required by the charter to build a meeting house for the worship of God.

Other conditions of the charter included provisions for possible future wars with the Indians, provisions for the preservation of the King’s mast trees and instructions to meet every March for the election of town officers. Imagine, our supposedly unique New Hampshire town meeting was mandated by the King of England! And the settlement of Chester was delayed because of what was called Lovewell’s War, a significant altercation with the Indians.

The initial settlement in this area would become Chester, perhaps taking the name of an English Village - perhaps a slur of ‘Chestnut.’ We would be amused today to call their plan for settlement “cluster housing”. Small homestead acreage lots were sold adjacent to each other so as to live compactly and provide protection against the Indians. They had every intention of creating a town center. Interestingly, the wide Chester main street was designated in their lot plan as a 10 rod road. Extending beyond the Home Lots were 50 acre lots for agriculture. Today we would probably term that “open space”. Extending further into the wilderness, the grant made provisions for Divisions of land: Division 2 created 100 acres lots that would eventually become Raymond, Auburn and

the southern part of Candia; all of Division 3, surveyed in 1739 with 80 acre lots, would become Candia in its entirety; Divisions 4 and 5 would extend to Hooksett and Derryfield, today's Manchester. Find the Parsonage Lot #90 very near the geographic center of the town. This initially placed ministry on its present hill.



The first settler in Division 3 (William Turner in 1742) must have carefully surveyed the area for he picked the choicest lot. He also must have had entrepreneurial foresight because he chose a location on the North Branch of the Lamprey River with the intention of building the first water powered mill to serve this new area. He anticipated others would soon follow and would need a mill to saw their logs into timbers, boards and shingles to build their houses. His inclination was right; the number of settlers steadily grew.

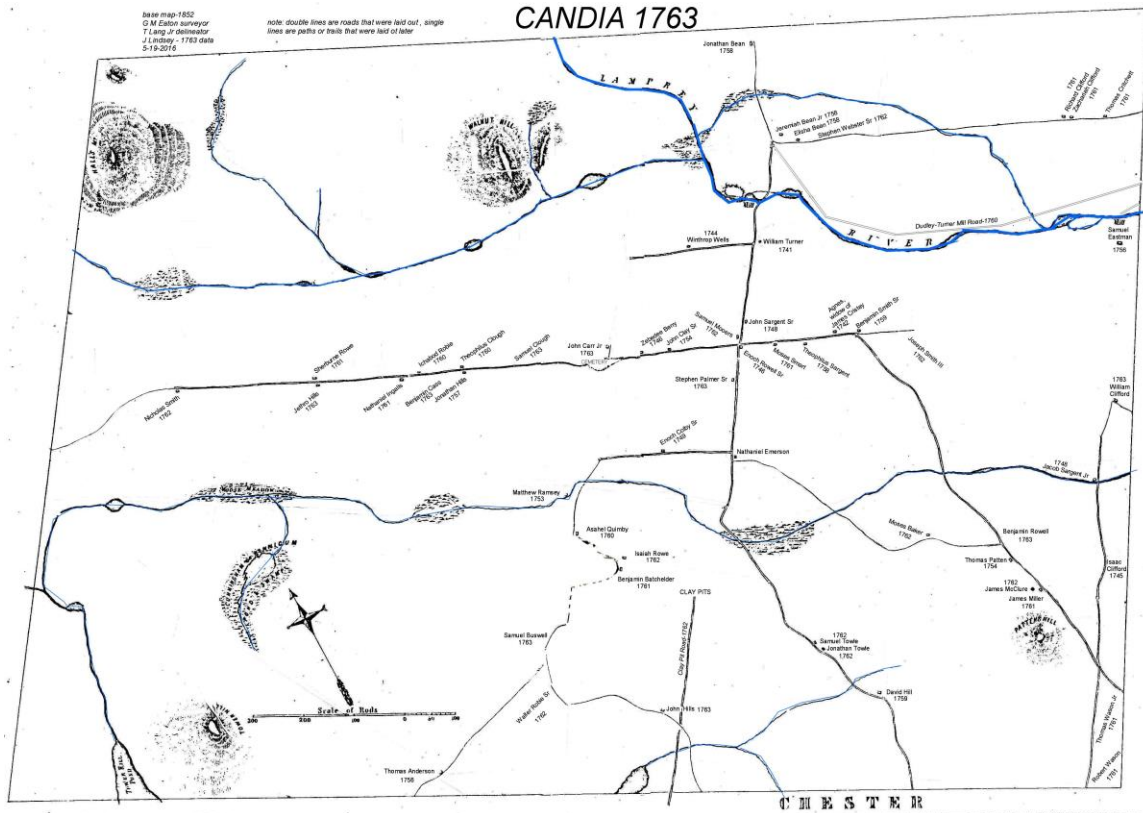
Some families came from the Chester direction: The cart path they created is still called Chester Road where the Emersons were original settlers. Today we are blessed with the Audubon Emerson Conservation area. The Palmers settled on what we call Palmer Road; the Critchetts on our Critchett Road, and another incredible ambitious family, the Beans, created a milling complex on the North Branch of the Lamprey still known today as Bean Island. The majority of the proprietary lots settled were on High Street, the official Range Way, appropriately named in light of the fact that Candia has the highest elevation between the Merrimack River and the Ocean. The ocean and Mt Monadnock were supposedly visible from here. Central to the Range Way were the designated Parsonage Lot and School Lot, 80 acres each as were the other lots. This was called the town "Senter". Community life centered around the preaching of the Gospel and education. Homesteaders choose lots extending east and west from this Senter,

including the Robie lot #62 that remains in the family today. The early people established a cemetery near the parsonage lot, our beautiful Hill Cemetery.

Division 3 and the northern section of Division 2, then called Charmingfare, had forests of large chestnut, oak, ash, maple with some pine and hemlock. There was a beautifully heavy forest over-story with minimal brush as the Indians had kept the forest open by burning the under growth. The work to fell any one tree with axes or a two-man crosscut saw was staggering. Its stump and root system would not be loose enough to be pulled by oxen for a couple of years. As the removal of the root system revealed the condition of the soil they so desperately needed, the frontiersmen found it not rich and workable, but discouragingly full of stone of all sizes. Thousands of miles of stone wall were in the future of these New Hampshire folks trying to settle The Granite State. Very little Candia topography qualifies with true agricultural soil that would have rewarded homesteaders with abundance.

Throughout this time of early homesteading, Chester had built its Meetinghouse for worship and as the town meeting place, meeting with God, meeting with man. Worshipping or participating in any town decision making process required travel on horseback or carriage to Chester, a distance of seven to fifteen miles. Needless to say, that presented a substantial difficulty. By 1763, twenty years after the first settler, the number of families had grown sufficiently that these hardy families desired to become their own parish. After being discussed at the Chester town meeting, a petition was written, signed by 38 Candia lot owners, and delivered to the General Assembly of the Province of New Hampshire. The reason for their request, *“the situation of the place where we live in is such that we cannot without much difficulty attend the publick worship of God with our familys in good weather, and at many time in the year not at all.”* (Eaton, 10). Remarkably, when the charter was granted, Dec. 17, 1763, the boundaries of our town were still hewn from hemlock, maple and pitch pine trees or perhaps more reliably, to stake and stones. Yet within those parameters, 100 acre lots in Division 2 and 80 acre lots in Division 3 were clearly designated. Even more remarkable, both the parsonage lot that became the site of the Meetinghouse, and the school lot were set very close to the geographical center of the town. Attending worship, meeting together and educating our children were central to their thinking.

The 38 signatures on the petition were all men. Early records indicate that these represented most of the settlers. Candia historian, Jim Lindsey, has searched histories and deed records to develop a list of homesteaders that includes the wives and children totaling 232 people. A purchased lot does not guarantee the person referenced necessarily lived here. Although Jim makes no claims to perfection, *Candia Homesteaders in 1763* is most interesting to survey. He also has created this 1763 map to locate the lots that were settled at the time of the petition.



CANDIA, A NEW SEPARATE PARISH

A gathering of the new townspeople was held on April 4, 1764, only 4 months after incorporation. *“Voted to raise 150 pounds Old Tenor to hire preaching to begin on the first of August next. Voted that 100 pounds Old Tenor be raised to hire schooling.”* (Moore, 48). It appears that their first communal act was to tax themselves for preaching and schooling. At a meeting a year later they almost doubled the amount.

In accordance with the terms of the charter granted to the town by Governor Wentworth, a call was issued to the citizens to assemble for the purpose of organizing and establishing an independent town government. The meeting was held Sept. 8, 1764. They elected a Moderator, Clerk, Selectmen, Surveyor of Highways (for the laying out of new roads), Fence Viewers (to settle disputes between land owners), Haywards (to impound animals running at large), Hogleeves (to be sure all hogs were yoked or ringed), Deer Inspectors (to prohibit killing deer between December and August to preserve the herd), and a committee to inspect the Selectmen’s accounts (our early auditors). The most telling of the times was the position of Tithing men that had nothing to do with 10% of anything. Our first tithing man was to insure *“that no taverner or retailer of spirits should suffer any apprentice to drink in his house, nor any inhabitant after ten o’clock at night, nor more than two hours; nor suffer any person to drink to intoxication, or others than strangers to remain in his house on the Lord’s day, under a fine of five shillings...all*

labor and recreation, traveling and rudeness at places of public worship on the Lord day were forbidden.” (Moore, 47-48)

Tradition also relates that the tithing man had a “tickle feather” to keep parishioners from snoozing!

THE MEETINGHOUSE

The town charter was confirmed (1763) and the positions necessary to function as a town were appointed (1764). At the town Meeting in 1766, they pledged themselves to the building of their Meeting House, 55 feet long and 45 feet wide. Thus began a project that would be continued by their children and grandchildren. Each inhabitant of the parish was assessed a sum that most would pay in the value of hourly labor, hand hewn oak timbers, clapboards, shingles, siding and more. Their conviction in light of their deprivation is remarkable. Candia historian F. B. Eaton contrasts his present day (1852): *“it is to be feared that if our modern societies were compelled to sacrifice so much of their time, labor and money, in comparison to their means, as did our Fathers, that places of worship would be few.”* (Eaton, 17). Money was raised by selling “pew ground.” A family would purchase a 5’ x 7’ plot and be responsible to build its own pew. The term ‘ground’ could be literal as there is no record of foundation or flooring at the raising of the timber framed structure. The parishioners year by year made improvements to their Meeting House with benches, glazed windows, pews, a gallery, a sounding board, porches, eventually a steeple and the pride of the parish, a Revere Bell. All this would come to a tragic end in January 1839 when the Meeting House was destroyed by fire. The luxury of a wood stove had been added. Regrettably, ashes from the stove had been removed and left outside the door, too close to the building.

The depth of our forefathers’ faith, the fortitude of their courage and their perseverance in the face of loss was remarkable. As they stood by the still hot embers, they pledged to build a new house of worship. Surely, we here in Candia have our own great cloud of witnesses. We are the benefactors of the decision they made that fateful night. Today no vestige of the original Meeting House remains. As there had been no excavation, no granite foundation, we are not even sure exactly where the structure stood, though it was in the area of the Soldiers’ Monument. Instead, we have inherited our beautiful colonial church.

The construction of the new church raises two questions. Why it was not built in the same architectural style? Why was it not built in the same location as the Meetinghouse? The answer to the first may be found in an advertisement for carpenters to build a Meeting House “in modern style.” In the passing of 75 years and three generations, style preference had changed. The architecture of this new church, still of timber frame construction, was to face South Road from its gable end. The front entrance to the Meeting House was on the long southern eaves side. Old English architecture had been replaced by Yankee style. We see the same change in barn architecture. Timber

frame construction of a church or a barn is actually the same! Very early NH barns are of English style while the most common barns are Yankee. Very few Meeting Houses or Old English barns remain. Those who take the venturesome climb up the narrow attic stairs- or even higher up the belfry stairs – are rewarded to see this remarkable timber framing in our Yankee church.

The answer to the second question is more speculative. An early drawing of the Meeting House depicts it near to the road with today's Fitts Museum and Steven Clay Bed and Breakfast set further back, just as the Soldiers' Monument sets closer to the road. If our 68' x 48' church of Yankee style had been set at that location, it would have been very close to those homes. And where would parishioners park all their carriages? Neighbors were undoubtedly also fearful of another church fire. South Road became an option in exchange for giving the Meeting House lot to the Town of Candia. How the town acquired the parcel requires more investigation.

Remember that when the original town lots were drawn, lot #90 was declared the parsonage lot, reserving it exclusively for that purpose. Early church fathers made attempts to provide housing for their ministers, but with questionable success. In 1813 they decided to sell the Parsonage Lot to private owners, extending as far as Adams Road. Rev. Jesse Remington bought a one acre parcel at the High Street corner to begin the construction of a home for his family. With only the foundation and basic structure underway, Rev. Remington passed away, only 50 years old. The lot was sold and others built the elegant colonial farm that is now at the location.

The location of South Road itself is another part of the answer to our question. The original road, a Range way, was laid out as a straight line to High Street. What works on paper often does not fit the topography. The road is indeed straight from Baker Road to the bottom of the church hill where it curves substantially to the right, creating a narrow parcel between the road and the stone wall. Why the curve? Two reasons. It would have been difficult for horses to pull wagons straight up the steep hill or to control the weight of a loaded wagon going downhill. Also, there were large rocks to avoid. When the Parsonage lots were sold, this rather odd narrow triangular parcel between the designated road and the actual road came under town ownership.

At the next town meeting, that awkward parcel was given to the church and the town acquired the original Meetinghouse site. The lot was deep enough for a "Yankee" church and long enough to accommodate carriage houses for the worshippers' horses. When Frederick Smyth donated the Soldiers' Monument, the town was able to use the Meetinghouse parcel for its honorable location, geographically central in the town.

The construction of the new church was amazingly accomplished in less than a year. The parishioners met in the Duncan store and granary on South Road while it was being built and were able to gather together nine months later in November in their new beautiful sanctuary. Your author has personal affinity to this part of the story as the Duncan Store was located on what is now the Philbrick farm.

*Let this be written for a future generation
that a people not yet created may praise the LORD.
Psalm 102:18*



OUR FIRST SETTLED PASTOR 1771
WE BECOME A CHURCH

True to their commitment at their first town meeting to fund Sabbath preaching, earliest records show travel to secure a minister and boarding arrangements. By 1768, only 5 years into township, the parish desired to have their own settled minister and began the search with a day of fasting and prayer. Several ministers, recent graduates from Harvard College, were summoned and preached for a trial period. David Jewett, a 1769 graduate yet to be ordained, started preaching in Oct of 1770, was officially called in November, and he accepted the call January 17, 1771. This is the date that we celebrate in the year 2021 as the 250th anniversary of the initial incorporation of our church. The intensity of the decision, for both David Jewett and for the parishioners is eloquently recorded in his acceptance document. Take note that there are only two sentences in this expressive, rather impassioned letter, written by a 22-year-old, newly graduated from Harvard. (Eaton, 23)

*To the Inhabitants of Candia
Christian Friends*

The serious Concern you seem to manifest for the Enjoyment of the Stated Institutions of the Gospel and in the most regular way by the preparations You are making for this purpose, and have proceeded so far as to give me an Invitation to settle among You in the Sacred office of the Gospel ministry and having voted me Such a maintenance as may be Sufficient, being go generally united in me and so agreeably harmonizing among y-selves, Having taken these things into the most serious and prayerful consideration, I Embrace this Opportunity to express my gratitude to you in having Such a Regard for me, which I trust with an Eye and aim to God's Glory has influenced you to act as you have; and would hereby signify to you that upon Condition a Church is incorporated in the Place in Christian love and friendship and on condition that you finish the Parsonage house by October or November in the year 1772, and Digg and Stone a well by December next and build a barn by July next You have my consent for tarrying—and should God in his alwise Providence so order that I settle among you may it be with an humble Dependance upon Divine Grace that I may be Enabled to behave agreeable to the character of a minister of Christ.

Entreating your earnest and fervent prayers at the throne of Grace, that in the Course of my ministration among you I may prove faithful and successful, that I may not Run in vain, nor spend my strength for naught, while holiness and Charity are our mutual and resolute Endeavours.

*From your real and serious friend,
DAVID JEWETT*

The parishioners did agree to finish the parsonage, dig a well and build a barn. He was to be paid 50 pounds, L.M. (lawful money) the first year, 5 additional pounds per year until a salary of 65 pounds was attained. Mr. Jewett remained pastor of the church for nine years, until 1780.

Consider the period of time that Mr. Jewett served the church. The history of Candia during the commencement of the War for Independence records the sending of representatives to the Provincial Congress at Exeter as tensions with King George III and Great Britain were rising. Actions included securing a stock of powder, flint and lead and assembling all males aged 16-60 at the Meeting House to discuss arms and ammunition. Men were drilled in the use of these arms, probably in the area we now call Moore Park. However, Thelma Weeks found a musket ball at the North side of the church and suspected that some training took place at the top of the hill. A group of Candia men, hearing of the initial skirmish at Lexington, immediately departed for Lexington in case of continued hostilities. They were joined by men from other towns, likely under the command of Henry Dearborn of Nottingham. As there was no continuing battle, some of them returned home but some enlisted in Massachusetts regiments. A most interesting account of that episode is recorded by Terry Nelson in *Hidden Histories of the New Hampshire Seacoast*. Shortly thereafter, 7 more Candia men were at the battle of Bunker Hill and then others went on to Cambridge where the newly appointed Commander George Washington was making preparations to drive the British army out of Boston. Answering the call to freedom meant leaving their wives and children to fend for themselves on homesteads barely established. Candia men were in numerous battles throughout the entirety of the war. Our Soldiers' Monument honors the 155 men who served in the War of the Rebellion and the two who died.

The hiring of a preacher in 1771 was a complicated financial undertaking. The soldiers received wages for support, a parish responsibility. Women left alone had very little or no income. Money itself was unreliable. The minister was initially salaried under British currency. Old Tenor was paper money issued by the province of Massachusetts. This was the first public paper money issued in the history of Western civilization. Its value, written on its engraved face, pledged backing by the colony. Due to inflation, there was great uncertainty of value during these formative years as Old Tenor was replaced by New Tenor. New Tenor currency was issued in Exeter when New Hampshire separated from Massachusetts. This also precipitously depreciated. In 1775 the Continental Congress in Philadelphia issued bills. The hiring of a preacher in 1771 was therefore a complicated financial undertaking. It is doubtful that Pastor Jewett received his full salary. His agreed salary of 65 pounds, British currency was equal to \$216.66 silver money. In February of 1779 the parish had to raise \$1,607 Continental money, by July it would have been \$3,200; in January of 1780, \$6357; the salary by July would have been \$13,000 Continental Money. Paper money became almost worthless.

A council was appointed to arbitrate a possible continuance of Pastor Jewett's ministry, but financial and other issues were not resolved. He was dismissed from the Candia pulpit in August of 1780, having served for almost 10 years. Mr. Jewett was installed as pastor of the Congregational Church in Winthrop, Maine in January 1782. This appointment was cut short by his untimely early death 14 months later at the age of 34. This brings into focus just how young he was when he became Candia's first "settled minister." Having graduated from Harvard at age 20, he preached in Candia and received the call at age 21. Considering the hardships that this young man endured, how amazed

he would have been to know that his church would celebrate his ministry at its Centennial, 150 year, Bicentennial and now 250 year landmark.

*We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD,
His power and the wonders he has done.
He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel
which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children,
so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born,
and they in turn would tell their children.
Psalm 78: 4-6*

TWO REMARKABLE MEN OF GOD SERVE THE CHURCH IN CANDIA

Joseph Prince

As a boy of only 7, a tragic accident resulted in the loss of an eye of young Joseph Prince. Inconceivably, he accidentally lost the sight in the other eye a few years later. He had been recognized for having exceptional intelligence and at age 14 was soon to enroll in Harvard. A period of depression and confusion was followed by a dramatic faith experience. His life was given direction during the Great Awakening as he heard the preaching of the British evangelist, George Whitfield. Revival spread throughout New England as Whitfield preached to crowds of thousands. So impressed with what he experienced, Joseph Prince knew that God had called him to be an evangelistic preacher.

Gifted with a remarkable memory, he listened to sermons and asked people to read doctrine to him, all of which he retained and was able then to convey to others. His delivery was so exceptional that great numbers of people sought him out and he began to travel from place to place as an itinerant evangelist in a time of revival. Because of his blindness, Mr. Prince depended on his sons to travel with him.

As his career matured, he was invited to preach at several churches and was eventually called to be the settled minister in Barrington, NH. Due to his blindness, Joseph's intention of a Harvard Education was not to be. Instead he became brilliantly self educated. His lack of formal doctrinal training caused controversy and opposition within the council of local churches. However, his call by the Barrington Congregational Church was affirmed by those who admired and appreciated his preaching and pastoral care. He became their founding pastor.

Candia would be the next church that he would serve (1782 -1789). He was considered a supply minister but was asked to serve for seven years. Candia avoided the formal educational issue. During this time he also preached in other churches, particularly Newburyport, Massachusetts where he was greatly loved. He was 66 years old when he left Candia. He suffered a stroke soon after his ministry here ended and

lived a short time in Newburyport before passing away. He was buried under the pulpit of the First Presbyterian Church of Newburyport alongside the church's first pastor and the renowned evangelist George Whitfield, the Billy Graham of his day. Research on the life of Joseph Prince was done by Pastor Edward Whitman, pastor of the Barrington Congregational Church 1994 to 2005, now a member of our Candia church.

Jesse Remington

The name Jesse Remington is very familiar in Candia as the name of our Christian High School which was established in 1992. The school name came from our church history, that of the pastor who served the early church for over 25 years. Pastors Jewett and Prince had done the preparation for the strong foundation of gospel preaching and faith that flourished under Pastor Remington. High school or academy training was not readily available so Pastor Remington took in several students, the forerunner of the education available in Candia today. A description of the man and his ministry was eloquently written by James Fitts at the Centennial of the church. We will include portions of his remarks, being assured that we cannot improve upon his discourse:

“He was born at Abington, Mass, in 1760. He graduated at Harvard in 1784 and received the honorary degree of Master of Arts, 1808. In early life he had serious impressions of the subject of personal religion; and before entering college at the age of twenty, he became a hopeful subject of renewing grace. He at once consecrated himself to the work of the Christian ministry, while his father had designed him for another profession. His constitutional impulsiveness often brought him into difficulty, but no man was more ready than he to acknowledge his fault and seek forgiveness. He was a thorough man, devout, diligent and untiring in his endeavor to do good. He was a solemn preacher, was himself much impressed with the truths he uttered. Out of the pulpit he could unbend even to nimble witted irony and jocose drollery. His sarcasm was keen as a Damascus blade; nothing could stand before it.

The ministry of Rev. Jesse Remington continued 24 years, 4 months, 13 days, and was terminated by his death March 13, 1815, at the age of 55. A funeral sermon, which was printed, was delivered by the Rev. Josiah Prentice of Northwood. Mr. Prentice says, “He was indeed an Evangelical Preacher, sound in the Faith, remarkably clear in the doctrines of grace, a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, holding forth the faithful word. He was solemn and impressive in his manner, evidently realizing the weight of his own responsibility to his Lord and Master. He felt those truths himself which he exhibited to others. He declared the whole council of God.

It is to be hoped that the people of Candia who owe so much of their character to the influence of his instructions will erect some more suitable monument over his final resting place to tell those who shall come after of his virtues.” (Fitts, 49-50)

Surely, a Christian High School in his name is a more suitable monument! However, his final resting place and its gravestone can be visited in the Hill Cemetery.



One of the historic buildings of the Candia Church campus is called the Jesse Remington Farm. Surely Jesse Remington did not live in this elegant colonial home. He did however buy a one acre parcel of land at this location and he began to build a home. His early death prevented its completion. In 2005 the Church sold a home that had served as a parsonage for several years and bought the “Jesse Remington Farm.” It has been the parsonage for David Runnion-Bareford, Bryan Moore and presently for Steven Baker. It has also been used as a church office and for meetings and Bible studies. The yard has been the site of Jesse Remington High School Humanities Faires and the Barn has been an important site at Lights on the Hill.

Under Jesse Remington’s leadership in 1793, a Church Covenant of faith and Christian life was written. Language structure was minimally revised in 1989 but the covenant was not changed. The faith and commitments of the early church remain the same today.

We will conclude this narrative of the foundational years with the death of Jesse Remington in 1815. We began our journey with the original British colonial survey of the region that designated our Parsonage Lot here on this hill. We followed the establishment and growth of God’s church, His Light on the Hill, through its first three ministers. The historical narrative is continued in the writings of James Hill Fitts at the Centennial of the Church and of Paul E. Sargent at its Bicentennial. The 250th committee will be challenged to document the 50 year period since the Bicentennial. This era includes the ministries of Robert Loring, David Runnion-Bareford, Bryan Moore and Steven Baker, the expansion of the church into a campus of buildings and the beginning of major ministries: Jesse Remington High School, Wilderness Camp, Lights on the Hill, Bethany Christian Services.

May the reader experience humility and a sense of privilege at being a participant in the continuing history of the Congregational Church of Candia, N.H. The vibrancy of today’s church has been built upon a 250 year foundation of faith.

As we venture into the next 50 years:

*O may all who come behind us find us faithful;
May the fire of our devotion light their way.
May the footprints that we leave lead them to believe,
And the lives we live inspire them to obey.
O may all who come behind us find us faithful.
(Jon Mohr)*

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