

32 Trinity Church

833 Route 12A, Cornish, New Hampshire



Simplicity is the hallmark of many churches in New England, creating a picturesque tranquility within the mountains, rolling hills and foliage. Trinity Church in Cornish, New Hampshire is no exception.

Dudley Chase was one of three men, arriving via the Connecticut River in a canoe, to establish the first settlement in Cornish. His son, Philander, a student at Dartmouth College, was so impressed with the Book of

Common Prayer that he persuaded his relatives and friends to establish an Episcopal Society in Cornish in 1793.

Built in 1808 by Philip Tabor, a carpenter and builder, Trinity Church is documented as "36 feet by 44 feet, with two porches and a belfry with a steeple and of suitable height." Most of the elements of the original building remain intact. The king post trusses with their hand-hewn members and mortise-and-tenon joints are in excellent condition, bearing testimony to the skill of the early craftsmen. Weathered clapboards, split-board lath, small-paned windows, and wide-paneled pine pews are among the features which appear to date back to the building's origin.

Over the years, renovations included removal of a balcony, which once surrounded three sides of the interior. One of the original "proches" was removed and replaced by a semi-circular chancel, which also has been removed. The lofty ceiling was replaced by a lower one, but the original is still visible. The church sits surrounded by "God's Acre," an early reference to its associated graveyard.

Philander Chase became the eventual Bishop of the Diocese of Ohio and was the founder of Kenyon College. Other prominent members of the Chase family were Jonathan Chase, an officer who served with distinction in the Revolutionary War; and Salmon Portland Chase, a Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

Trinity Church was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1978.

Sources:

<http://www.cric.org/heritage/N08-2.htm>

http://www.cornishnh.net/?page_id=503