

## CHRIST CHURCH, HOPE, BRITISH COLUMBIA

### Faith in Motion - 1861 A Centenary and Beyond

"The faith that moves mountains always carries a pick." And so it was with the first vicar, The Reverend Alexander St. David Francis Pringle, a graduate of Cambridge, who arrived in Hope in 1859.

Within a year of his arrival he had established the first library on the mainland. He then set about raising money for the building of a church. From time to time he would roll up his sleeves to lend a hand in its construction. The list of subscribers, headed by Governor James Douglas, can be found in the Provincial Archives, Victoria.



To place Christ Church in its historical context, consider: Before Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick joined together in 1867 to create the Dominion of Canada, and before the Province of British Columbia joined that confederation in 1871, the cornerstone of Christ Church was laid by the Rev. George Hills, first Bishop of the new colony of British Columbia. The date was July 9, 1861. On November 8 of that same year Bishop Hills returned to consecrate the completed church.

The church is an immediate link with the initial development and history of the province. It is the only remaining building in Hope still in existence from that historic period, and the oldest Anglican Church on the mainland on its original site. Its doors have never closed to worshippers.

The builders were Manson & White of New Westminster with a contract cost of \$1,903.00. Furnishings brought the total cost to \$2,353.40.

The composition of this small Gothic-influenced church is reminiscent of rural English churches of the 19th century. The location of the entrance porch on the side of the building, the double-leaf Gothic door, the miniature spire with its louvered lucarnes, and the diamond-patterned windows, all contribute to the picturesque quality of the building. The roof structure (consisting of rafter, colinear beams, struts, and purlins) is visible from the interior. Metal tie-rods supplement this system. An un-dated early photo reveals that all the ridges were once capped by cresting, that there was a small bell enclosure atop the porch and that there were doors on both sides of the sanctuary (one has since been blocked). (The Lillooet-Fraser Heritage Resource Study)

### The Royal Engineers - 1858-1863

The Fraser River Gold Rush with its influx of thousands alerted Governor Douglas to the immediate need for the formation of civil government and the establishment of law and order. And in 1858 Colonel Richard Clement Moody, with his hand-picked volunteer Royal Engineers, skilled in their trades and professions, arrived to take on the task. Their credits are immeasurable, including lending their expertise in the plan and design of Christ Church.

True to the tradition of the earlier Royal Engineers, members of the Royal Canadian Engineers' Field Training Squadron, Vedder Crossing, gave their recommendations on its renovation in 1958 - nearly one hundred years after its construction. Structurally the building remains true to

its original ecclesiastical character. The flags at the rear of the church mark the role played by the Royal Engineers and the Royal Canadian Engineers.

#### Hands Across the Sea and the Century

As you leave, just above the door you will see a framed section of the century-old carpet which previously covered the sanctuary. It was a gift to the church in the new colony by Baroness Angela Burdett-Coutts. This remarkable Lady, whose philanthropy included all races, creeds and causes, gave 35,000 pounds towards the establishment of the Church of England in British Columbia. Other sections of the carpet give color and comfort to the kneelers in the chancel.

Within the church a sense of history remains. Two Service Books, printed in 1857, are preserved in a glass covered case, given by the Society For Promoting Christian Knowledge of London, England. Plaques and memorial gifts echo the place of earlier worshippers.

On November 8, 2021, Christ Church marked its 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of continuous service in Hope. The Right Reverend John Stephens, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of New Westminster, joined The Reverend Timothy Morgan (Vicar) and the congregation for a wonderful celebration of Christ Church's historical and ongoing ministry.

ANGLICAN CHURCH OF CANADA DIOCESE OF NEW WESTMINSTER