

After serving for 89 years as the humble and dedicated place of worship for the Baptist folk of the Scotch Line area, the venerable building shown above has been put up for sale by tender. The church has over the year been a familiar land mark for all those who travelled highway 36 between Lindsay and Bobcaygeon. It is located on the north-west corner of the highway and what is known as the Scotch Line.

"Post" staff photo.

Eighty-nine years ago is a long way looking ahead, but according to elderly residents of Verulam Township, it seems like yesterday looking back.

Previous to 1876 a noble and stout hearted group of pioneers with Scottish ancestry settled on what is known as Scotch Line. They were hardy, dreamed visions, and in the course of time, they banded together to erect one of the finest small churches in the township.

Located on Highway 36, east of Dunsford, on the north-west corner of Scotch Line, this place of worship filled an important place in the community for the past 89 years.

A few days ago a small group of church goers gathered at this the home chapel for hundreds of people of the Baptist faith for over four score years. In a sense they gathered to say farewell to the fine old edifice, for because of lack of patronage, the Deacons and Trustees decided to dispose of the church by tender.

The decision is looked upon as regrettable, especially as it has been the place of family worship for many loyal Baptists, as well as by residents of other denominations.

The small group was headed by two deacons, one of whom was that grand Laird of the Line, J. J. Robertson, who is hale and hearty, kind and affable, at an age just a few years younger than the church which is closing its doors. Others in the group included: Bertram Robertson, deacon and treasurer; Mrs. Torrance Robertson, organist; Rev. M. D. Millar, Baptist pastor stationed at Bobcaygeon; Mrs. Arthur Kennedy, clerk; and Mr. J. J. Robertson, deacon.

"My heart aches to see this fine old Church sold to the highest bidder" said J. J. Robertson. It looked like a tear in his eye as he added "It's a sad day to see the old Church close down. Services have been carried on here every Sunday until last October".

The younger deacon, Bertram Robertson, remarked that the church had filled a place in the well-being of the district. "We have had some fine preachers, and a faithful organist and we know that many

people were converted in this fine old church”.

The Church is larger than it looks when one approaches the large arch like entrance. The seats are the old type with the heavy iron rests at the end of the pews. The carpet has already been sold, the piano and lovely old organ have disappeared.

A massive, fine, hand carved pulpit in place on the platform, as well as a very large and heavily constructed minister's chair. The communion table is still in its place, and the edifice is still spotlessly clean and the tall half-circle top windows add to the charm and vintage of the sanctuary.

On the outside the church demands respect and attention. Thousands of motorists have glanced at the Church as they swept past at fifty or sixty miles per hour, as the location was well chosen by the builders. At one time four stately pine trees marked the four corners of the lot.

Today the Church seems to be nestled on a slight rise, completely flanked by beautiful shade trees.

It is interesting to note that the original price of the lot was \$20 and the old deed specifies that the Church is not on the Scotch Line, the familiar name used today, but was named Scot's Line, the legitimate wording for the Church established so many years ago by descendants of men and women of Scottish birth.

When the group took their places in the Church, and Rev. Millar, Baptist minister from Bobcaygeon, stood behind the cathedral-like pulpit, it reminded the Dean of Deacons, J. P. Robertson, of the many fine ministers who laboured long and well in the Church, and of the many congregations, the innumerable interesting anniversaries, and the many lawn socials and sumptuous dinners. He recalled to memory many of the names of the different pioneer families who have passed to the Great Beyond.

The following is a more detailed history of the fine old edifice, which was read to the congregation at the 70th. anniversary of the Church, as told by Elizabeth Murdock and

written by J. J. Robertson.

"The Scotch Line Church was opened the first Sunday in October, 1876. I was asked if I remembered the opening, to which I replied I did. I don't remember much about the Sunday, but I remember the tea in the shed which was made to defray expenses, which was very common in those days".

"We children were very interested in a bride and groom who were expected to come, Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Hunter, and their bridesmaid and groomsman. I also remember we children were sat around the platform to make room for people in the pews".

"Since that anniversary I have received more facts about the beginning of this Baptist Church on Scotch Line from a memorial Rev. J. B. Kennedy wrote of my father."

"My grandfather came to this Line from Scotland with his wife. He brought with

him a Bible, a stout heart, and sixteen shillings in his pocket. He was not a Baptist, but across the trail was another Scotsman by the name of Robert Menzies who was a Baptist”.

“The two pioneers and their wives, by the light of their log fires, discussed religion and read their Gaelic Bibles to find out which was the right faith according to the Word. As a result my grandfather and his wife became Baptists”.

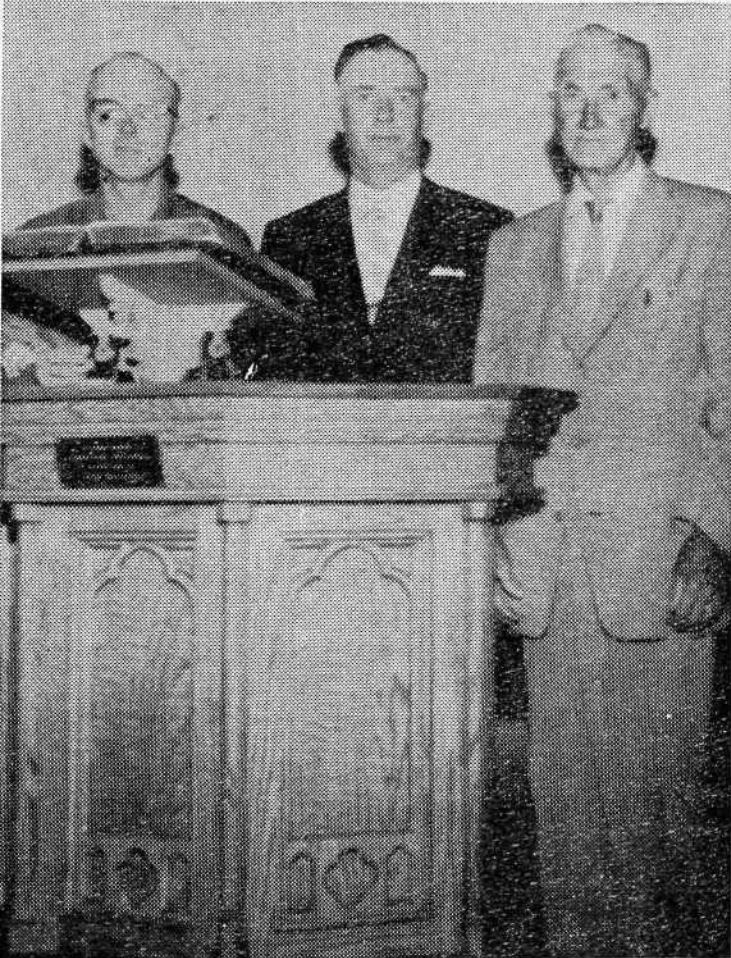
“As far as I can find out that was the start of this cause. They held meetings in their homes, and later in a log school-house that was situated on a corner of what is Alec Robertson’s farm now”.

“My father and Uncle Dougal were converted and took up the work about the time of grandfather’s death. Mr. Menzies, Uncle Dougal and my father undertook the building of this church.”

“Rev. J. B. Kennedy and his brother were among the first converts, then their father, so it gained memberships, and with the help of the Home Mission developed the cause”.

“At one time there were thirty-six Robertsons on the Church roll. I was saved and joined the church about ten years after it was opened. There were ten of us baptised”.

“Members from this church are scattered all over this country, there were three ministers among them”.



Standing behind the sacred desk supporting 'the Word', are the Pastor of Scotch Line Church, Rev. M. D. Millar, of Bobcaygeon, and deacons Bertram Robertson, left, and J. J. Robertson, right. It was with much regret that the deacons and church officials found it necessary to close the spiritual birthplace of their generation. Scotch Line Church has stood for 89 years as a landmark and a symbol of the faith of the people it served.

—“Post” staff photo