

THE HISTORY

The Township of Erin attracted its pioneer settlers in the first decade of the last century.

Its chief attractions were fertile soil, plenty of water, plenty of hemlock for tea for all time to come, plenty of deer, bears and wolves; the Indians were very friendly; there was no need to fear the ague, as the township was said to be very healthy, and there were a few settlers, yet it was "far away."

The Historical and Statistical Survey of the Synod of the Church of Scotland for 1866 says: "The Township of Erin was settled chiefly by Highland Scotch. The land is hilly but of good quality."

The early settlers had a notion that the "gentlemen of the black robe" were an expensive luxury, and so they resolved to have nothing to do with them. To consult a doctor was, they believed, the surest and nearest way to the tomb.

We can hardly believe that the Highland Scotch, with the admixture of English and Irish, who were the forebears of the present generation, really held these views.

The "Grim Geneva Minister," in the old land, may have given some cause for aversion, but the inborn spirit of worship, with the spiritual needs of the growing children, would surely triumph over these sentiments.

A twelve-foot square room, somewhere in Erin village, was the first place in which Erin settlers met to worship God, and all the settlers in the township looked to this place as their only spiritual home for some years. Later the schools were used for worship.

When some godly settlers from Tarbert in Argyle and Kilmeny in Islay, and other places in Scotland came to the 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th concessions of Erin, in the "thirties," they soon evidenced their desire for a "Faith's pure shrine," for they would "not forsake the assembling of themselves together, as the manner of some is," and they resolved to erect a union church, joining with Baptists, and Methodists and Presbyterians in the building of a place of worship.

The Union Church was erected in the graveyard situate about the centre of the village, and now on the farm owned by a respected elder of the church, Mr. Robert A. Reed.