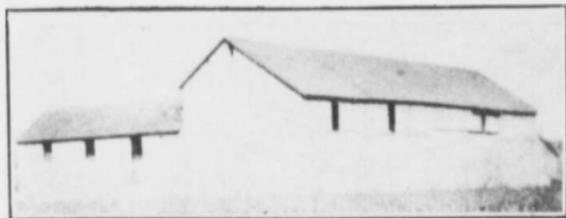


and through the kind exertions and contributions of the settlers and their friends the church was opened free of debt on the site at present occupied solely by the cemetery. The ground for this church site and burying ground was presented by Mr. John Ritchie, or "Big John," and his brother Thomas. It is said that the collections taken on that first Sabbath morning amounted to about \$14.00, a sufficient amount to provide a heating stove and pipes. The Bible for the pulpit was presented by Mr. R. Malcolm of Toronto.



BARN WHERE FIRST SERVICES WERE HELD

The people were delighted to have a church of their own in a central and convenient place where they might come themselves and bring their children. At the opening of the new church the congregation consisted of some thirteen families, consisting of Malcolms, Patersons, two families of Straths, Kerrs, two families of Grahams, Dickies, and five families of Ritchies. Mr. Geo. Ritchie, who now resides on the farm occupied by his father, the late John Ritchie, was baptized in the church on that first Sunday. Shortly after this time other families began to arrive—James and George Elrick, the Frazers, W. Mills, John and Joseph Lambie. Then later, in the settlement now known as Crossland, or Knox, Walter Hunter, John Anderson and Noah Cotton came. These three families united with Elmvale congregation and continued as members till the formation of Knox congregation. The distance to Elmvale church was six miles, which they repeatedly