

# HIGHLAND REGIONAL COUNCIL



# FIELD MONUMENTS

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

1 SITE CODE									
2 NGR		H N H		7 8		S E		0 0 1	
3 QUAL									
6 SITE NAME									
S T D U T H U S' C H A P E L									

4 DISTRICT ROSS + CROMARTY			5 PARISH TAIN		
7 AREA STATUS		8 SITE STATUS SCHEDULED		9 REGIONAL STATUS	
11 CONCORDANCE OS NH 78 SE 1 NMR		12 FORM STANDING STRUCTURE		13 DIMENSIONS c14.1m LONG x 5.15m WIDE INTERNALLY	
16 RELATIONSHIP OF ELEMENTS			17 CONDITION RUINED		
10 GENERIC TYPE CHURCH				14 PERIOD/DATE 13th C	
				15 DATING METHOD DOC	
				18 SHAPE	
				19 THREAT AND DATE	

20 LAND USE LAND BUILT UPON			21 GEOLOGY		
22 SOILS			23 VEGETATION		
24 HYDROLOGY/DRAINAGE		25 RELIEF KNOLL ON GENTLE HILLSLOPE		26 ASPECT N = NE = E	
				27 ALTITUDE 5 = 10m OD	

28 EXCAVATION (EXCAVATOR: DATE: EXTENT: QUALITY)

29 BIBLIOGRAPHY (AUTHOR: DATE: TITLE: JOURNAL OR PUBLISHER: VOLUME: DETAIL)

1. ORDNANCE SURVEY: 1907: 6" MAP
2. MACGIBBON & ROSS: 1896: ECCLESIASTICAL ARCHITECTURE OF SCOTLAND: EDINBURGH: 2: pp538-542
3. NEALE, J.M.: 1848: ECCLESIASTICAL NOTES: LONDON
4. TAYLOR, Rev.W.: 1882: RESEARCHES INTO THE HISTORY OF TAIN: A. ROSS, TAIN: : .
5. HMB(SDD): 1985: LIST OF SCHEDULED MONUMENTS
6. ORDNANCE SURVEY: 1906: 25" MAP
7. SOC. ANT. SCOT.: 1979: ARCH. SITES & MONS. OF EASTER ROSS: RCAHMS: p28, No. 238

30 GROUND PLAN NO.		31 GROUND PHOTO NO. NMR A 14050 NMR A 14047	
32 SLIDES NO.		33 HR. AR. NO.	
34 NMR. AP. NO.		35 OTHER AP. NO.: SOURCE	
36 ARCHIVE AND LOCATION			
37 GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY		38 SAMPLES	
39 PALYNOLOGY		40 NUMERICAL DATES: RANGE: LAB NO.	
41 SMALL FINDS			42 MUSEUM/LOCATION
43 OTHER			

44 NAME & ADDRESS OF OWNER		45 ATTITUDE OF OWNER	
46 NAME & ADDRESS OF TENANT		47 ATTITUDE OF TENANT	

48 ACCESS & RESTRICTIONS	
49 NAME & ADDRESS OF FINDER/RECORDER: DATE	
50 RECORDER: DATE AM: 30.5.1985	
51 CHECK: DATE DY G.G. 1985	

52 TEXT

"(NH 7855 8222): St. Duthus's Chapel (In ruins)" (1)

"See over for remainder of text."

"See plan HNH 78 SE 005" (6)

"NH 786 822 St Duthus Chapel." (5)

"The chapel was destroyed by fire in 1429 and the ruins stand in the modern churchyard." (7)

## ST. DUTHUS' CHURCH, TAIN, ROSS-SHIRE.

The ancient town of Tain claims to have received its first privileges from Malcolm Canmore in the eleventh century. It was also the site of an early church, and St. Duthus, the patron saint of the town, is reputed to have been the Bishop of Ross in the eleventh century. The existing town stands at a point near the entrance to Dornoch Frith, on an ancient sea margin, which rises above a great expanse of sandy links stretching eastwards towards the sea. It possesses no less than three ancient churches, all said to have been dedicated to St. Duthus. This saint probably lived about the year 1000, and his remains are said to have been translated to his native town of Tain in 1253.\* The most ancient church (4)

(Fig. 931) stands on a knoll which rises above the general level of the links. It is now surrounded by a well kept modern cemetery, and is at some distance from the town, but is believed to have stood in the midst of the houses of the older Tain, which occupied the low ground near the sea. This ancient fane is a simple parallelogram, 46 feet long by 16 feet 6 inches wide internally. Three of its walls (Fig. 932), which are all built with the granite boulders of the district, and the east and west gables are still almost entire, but the south wall is reduced to a state of ruin. The north, east, and west walls, which are much exposed to the storms from the sea, are without any openings, except a small pointed window in the west gable. The doorway and windows seem to have been in the south wall, which may account for its ruinous condition. The one small window remaining in that wall, and the pointed window in the west gable, indicate a date not earlier than the thirteenth century. Besides these there are no features to give a clue to the date of the structure; but the period they point to agrees with the time when the body of St. Duthus is believed to have been brought here for burial.

The shrine of St. Duthus was regarded as specially sacred, and possessed the right of sanctuary. To it the wife and daughter of King Robert I. betook themselves when compelled to flee from Kildrumny Castle, in Aberdeenshire. But the sacred nature of the sanctuary did not avail the royal fugitives, and they were delivered up to Edward by the Earl of Ross.

It is believed that this church was destroyed by fire in 1429; M'Neill of Creich, having pursued his enemies thither, took that means of evading the right of sanctuary. He did not seize his enemies within the sacred ground, but set fire to the church in which they had taken refuge.

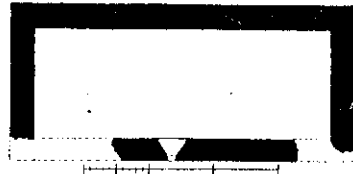


FIG. 931.—Old St. Duthus' Church. Plan.

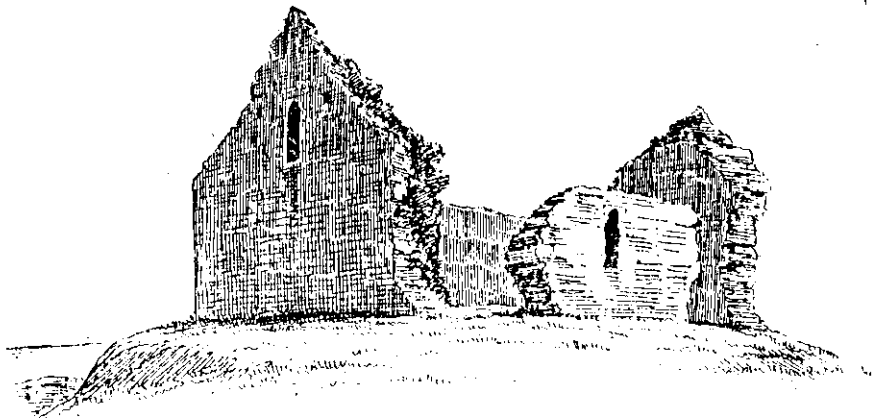


FIG. 932.—Old St. Duthus' Church. View from South-West.