

Croick Church

Denomination; *Church of Scotland.*

Status; *Parish Church. Presbytery of Sutherland.*

Visited by; *Bruce A Lindsay.*

Date of visit; *24 July 2017.*



Croick Church was once at the heart of a busy crofting community. Today it is a solitary building in a beautiful but sparsely populated glen in Easter Ross. Surrounded by trees, it is not easy to appreciate the simple beauty of the building. It was constructed in the 1820s, one of just over 30 'Parliamentary' Churches provided by the State in areas where there was no church to serve the local population. Now in the Parish of Kincardine, Croick and Edderton, services are still held in the Church, on the second Sunday of the month, May to September. The old manse, adjacent to the Church, is now a 'high end' holiday let.

The interior is still very much as built. There is a long communion table running the length of the building, designed for the few who were deemed to be of sufficient merit to partake of the elements. The windows of plain leaded glass are the originals installed in the 1820s. A raised pulpit with space directly below for the precentor dominates, giving the minister an uninterrupted view of his congregation. Electric lighting is the only concession to modernity!



Croick has a particularly poignant association with the highland clearances. In 1845 the people of nearby Glencalvie were displaced by the landowner who saw greater profit in sheep farming. Prior to their departure for more distant parts, the dispossessed sought sanctuary in the grounds of Croick Church. Whilst there, some scratched messages, which can be seen to this day, on the glass of the east window; a lasting reminder of their dispersed community. The Glencalvie clearance attracted widespread attention at the time as it was covered in the Times newspaper. A copy of the paper with an article describing the harrowing events and personal hardships endured is on display in the church.