



[The First Churches in Lochs]

The Isle of St. Columba in Loch Erisort was an important centre of religion in the Celtic Church from an early date. The first Presbyterian Parish Church in Lochs was not established until 1724 when a thatched Church and Manse was built at Swordale on the shores of Loch Erisort near Keose. That Church was in use for over 70 years until a new Church seating 700 people was built in 1796 on a small tidal island in Keose Bay where the seaweed factory stands at present.

The Church served the whole Parish of Lochs, which included the Carloway/Shawbost area on the west coast, until the Disruption in 1843 when the Minister Rev. Robert Finlayson and the entire congregation of Lochs left the Parish Church and joined the newly established Free Church, and built a new Church at Crossbost. Carloway Free Church left Crossbost in 1846. Park Free Church left in 1879. Kinloch Free Church left in 1885.

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