



## Mans Stone, Strathyre

The route of St Magnus is partly determined by a series of stones, locally called Mans or Mansie Stanes that are said to have been raised as resting places for the body and shrine of Magnus as he was carried from his place of death to his first place of burial in Birsay. Later, when his shrine was moved from Birsay to Kirkwall, the stones set up to raise the shrine on were said to have been blessed with oil, and thereafter considered sacred.

Ernest Marwick, the historian who first looked into these places wrote: "There may have been a time when pilgrims following the processional route and praying at the stones were a familiar sight."

The first resting place after leaving the church in Birsay is an unassuming stone in a field near the house of Strathyre. It is the only upstanding Mans Stone and as such, it has a special significance. This is made all the more remarkable knowing that the stone was almost removed in the past, and had it not been for the knowledge of the landowner, it would no longer be standing.

The place is said to mark the last spot from which the Brough of Birsay may be glimpsed.