



CHURCH OF ST. JAMES AT THE CASTLE*

*** building totally or partially in ruins**

You can find this point of interest in Menaggio - Path 1 - Stage 2

DESCRIPTION

(Silvia Fasana)

On Castle hill, presumably on the north side, stood a church dedicated to Saint James, already mentioned in a document dated 1198, next to a Benedictine convent, on which we only have scarce and scattered information, mostly references in 13th century notarial deeds.

As far back as 1317, the Benedictines moved to Como, where, together with the nuns from the convent of St. Michael of Lompino (Mount Olimpino), they founded the convent of Saint Columbanus.

However, even after the convent was shut down, the church continued to be owned by the nuns of St. Columbanus and was served by a chaplain, who had the right to be called Abbot. A lengthy, seemingly endless period – in fact lasting a few centuries – of decadence followed, which Bishops unsuccessfully tried to halt by urging the nuns to care for the church more deservedly. In 1627, Bishop Carafino, further to the extreme deterioration of the building, officially decreed that the title and relevant benefit be transferred to the altar of St. Michael in the Collegiate of St. Stephen, authorizing the demolition of the altar and of the church itself.

However, nobody had the courage to demolish the church; on the contrary, following the Bishop's decision, attempts were made to save the church by patching it up. Another 150 years passed, as the last document giving evidence that the church was still being served dates back to 1768. It has not been possible to reconstruct what happened in the years that followed, nor when or why the church was deconsecrated and demolished.

(Information drawn from *Novecento anni da Mengaldo (1095-1995)*, Parrocchia di Santo Stefano, Menaggio 1995)