

IX.

FIELD WORK IN COLONSAY AND ISLAY, 1944-45.

BY STUART AND C. M. PIGGOTT.

Read February 11, 1946.

I. NOTES ON THE DUNS AND OTHER ANTIQUITIES OF COLONSAY AND ORONSAY. By C. M. PIGGOTT.

In September 1944 I spent a fortnight in Colonsay and was able to visit and make notes on many of the more important archæological sites both in that island and in Oronsay. Mr and Mrs Maxwell-Hyslop were with me, and I would like to record my gratitude to them for their help.

Very little work has been done on the antiquities of Colonsay, except on sites of Mesolithic or Viking date; consequently the relevant literature is small in amount. All the sites noted here have been referred to in one of the three standard books on the islands, but as in each case the primary object of the author has not been to deal with the prehistoric remains, that subject has been somewhat neglected.¹

Apart from the caves and the Viking and Early Christian remains on the islands, by far the most notable group of sites is that of the duns, and these will be described individually where possible. The miscellaneous sites visited will first be noted.

A. Megalithic Sites.

Stones at Uaigh an Fhomhair, Kilchattan.

On a small level area on the south-western slope of Carn Mor, overlooking Dubh Loch and the bay below Kilchattan, is a setting of stones planned in fig. 1 and known as Uaigh an Fhomhair (The Giant's Grave) (Loder, p. 11, with photograph on pl. xvi). Without excavation it is difficult to interpret, but the remains do suggest some form of ruined passage-grave with a chamber 5 feet across and an approach passage 10 feet or so long (Pl. XV, 1). The stones surrounding the "chamber" area are laid flat as if the lowest course of walling, and are

¹ The following books are valuable for use in the study of Colonsay prehistory:—

Colonsay and Oronsay in the Isles of Argyll, by John de Vere Loder (1935). Fully documented, and with the first two chapters on the pre-Norse remains. It contains a most useful map, specially prepared by Mr Loder, with a scale of 2½ inches to a mile, and contours coloured in 50-foot intervals.

Book of Colonsay and Oronsay (2 vols.), by Symington Grieve (1923).

Colonsay, by Murdoch McNeill (1910).

See also *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. xv. (1880-81), p. 113: Stevenson, "Antiquities of the Islands of Colonsay and Oronsay."

backed by remains of a cairn and other flat stones which might be slipped corbels, but the remains of the "passage" are large orthostatic blocks. There are other stones outside the area planned, some of which appear to be earth-fast, but their relation to the main structure is not apparent.

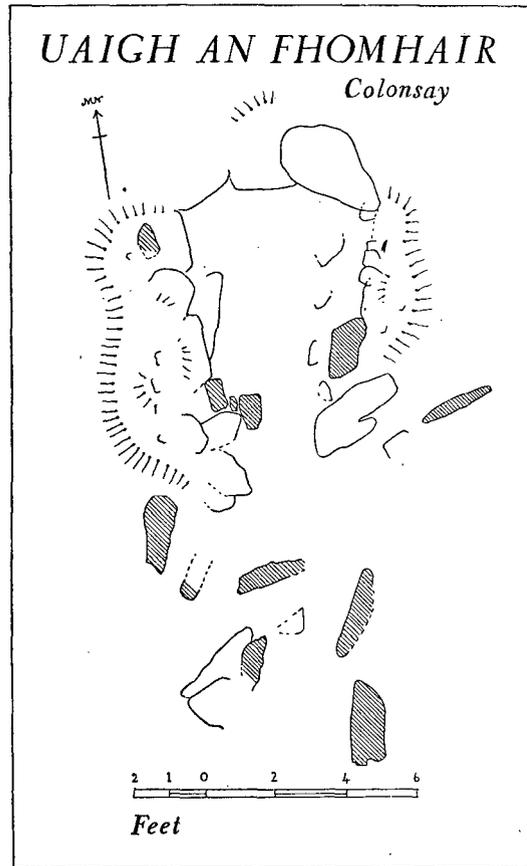


Fig. 1.

Cnoc Eabraiginn, Garvard.—Standing-stone, erect in 1935, but since fallen.

Beinn Earrnigil, Garvard.—Described by Loder as a stone circle, 98 feet from east to west and 108 feet from north to south. Near a group of hut-circles. This consists of angular stones, all quite small and lightly set into the ground, and it is difficult to believe the setting is of any very considerable antiquity.

B. The Duns (fig. 2).

An attempt was made to visit as many duns as possible, and in the absence of adequate information to guide us only to fortified sites, much valuable time was wasted in visiting natural hillocks, often in very inaccessible places, and which may never have been used for defensive purposes. It is known that much robbing of stones for building has taken place, but the probability is that many of the sites now known as duns may only have earned that name through being conspicuous in some way, and likely places for fortification. There are no brochs on either island, and I was unable to find any earthworks. All the defences of the duns are made of stone-work, and I could find no traces of vitrification, though this might perhaps have escaped attention in the necessarily hurried visits. Most of the dry-stone walls surrounding the forts are now grass-grown, and only excavation will show the true nature of their construction. It is worth noting that although Grieve found no evidence for vitrification at Dun Eibhinn, he says: "The Right Hon. Sir John M'Neill, G.C.B., informed me that he had picked up pieces of vitrified material at this place." But no similar claim is made for any of the other forts.

Sites not apparently Fortified.

Dùnán Easdail is a rocky promontory on the north side of Kiloran Bay.

Dùnán na Fidean.—Similar, jutting out into the Strand between Colonsay and Oronsay.

Dùnán Iochdar na Garbhaird.—Similar.

Dùnán a' Mhiodaire.—I could find no one who knew the exact location of this, but suppose it refers to a rocky mass in the middle of what is still one of the best pastures in Scalasaig, between the village and the harbour, on the north side of the road.

Dùn Crom.—A hill certainly conspicuous enough to earn a name, but not now fortified, and it is doubtful if it ever was. It is associated with Duns Loisgte and Meodhonach in the place-name Na Dùintean.

Dùn Ghailionn is just above the abandoned village of Riasg Buidhe, which, according to the remains of an early cross and chapel, must have been a settlement of many hundred years' standing. The dun is a wide, low mound, and quite unlike a fort.

Dùn Leaghan.—Wrongly identified by Symington Grieve as the site of Dùn Leithfinn, on the strength of the similarity in the names.

Dùn Loisgte.—On the other side of Dùn Meodhonach from Dùn Crom. The three together are very conspicuous heights, but only the middle site is fortified.

An Dùnan (or Dùnan nan Nighean according to Grieve) is a round

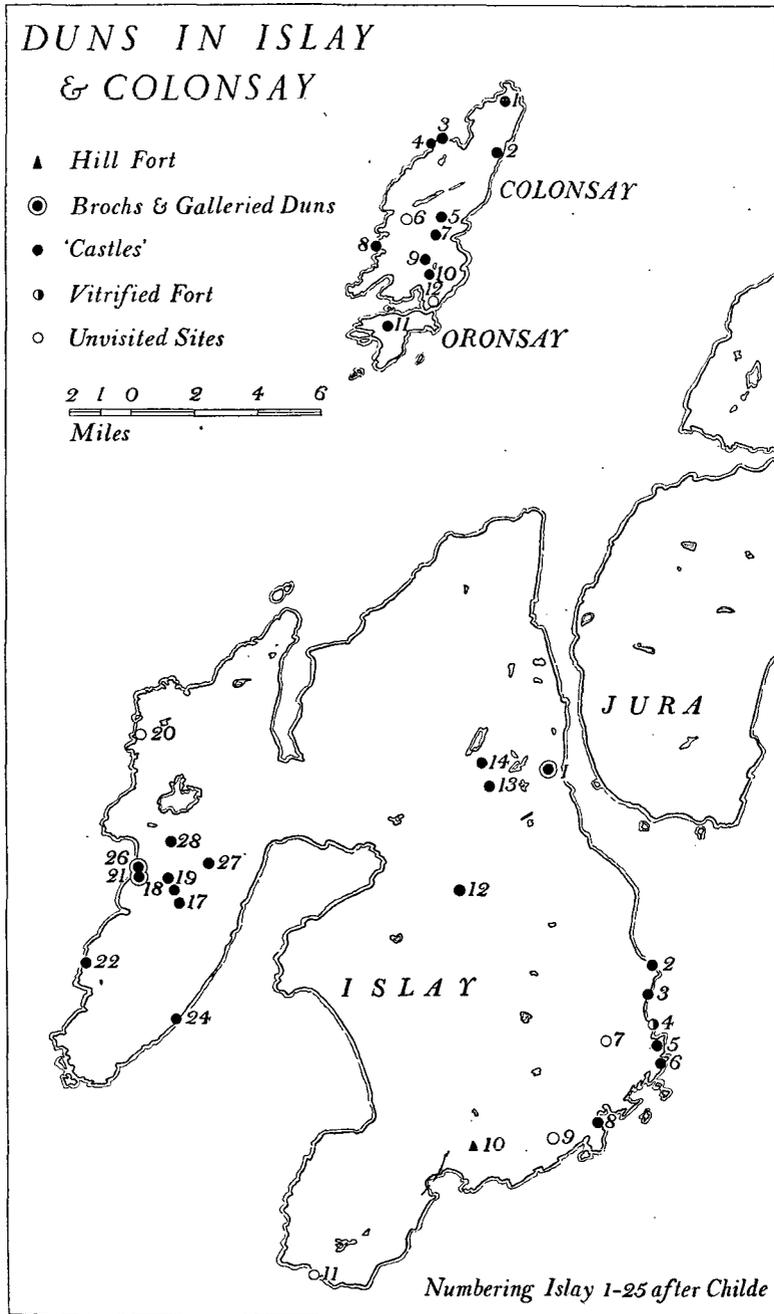


Fig. 2.

rocky height at the extreme west end of the Strand. There are many loose stones lying on the top, but certainly no evidence of any structure.

I was unable to find any sign of Dùn Meodhonach in Kilchattan, but Grieve says: "This is a small dun situated on the steep face of the hill on the east side of the valley near Dremclach, nearly opposite the ruins of Kilchattan Chapel. There are signs of its having been occupied in comparatively recent times. A slight excavation at its kitchen-midden revealed a quantity of bones of the domestic animals."

Sites not Visited. (All on Colonsay.)

Dùnan a' Chullaich, Dùnan Mór, Dùnan na Nighean (Ardskenish), Dùn Creagach, Dùn Dubh, Dùn a' Gharaidh, Dùn na Mara.

There is no reason to suppose that any of these sites, except Dùn na Mara, was fortified. Stevenson mentions that that site "has been circular but now only half remains. The entrance of the fort is better seen here than in any remaining one and goes through a wall about 10 feet thick."

Fortified Sites.

1. *Dùn Meodhonach* (Balnahard).—Long narrow hill between Dùn Crom and Dùn Loisgte. Fortifications follow the crest, with steep drops on all sides. I could find no traces of the entrance, as for considerable lengths all the walling stones had fallen over the edge. There were traces of several circular huts on the top, and an additional line of defence thrown out at an angle on the east side, from which side the fort could have been most easily stormed. This site is very similar to Dùn Cholla.

Grieve says: "About the year 1862, rabbits scraped out of a burrow at the foot of this dun two small metal cups, believed to be of copper or bronze, and two plates of the same material, each about the size of a tea-saucer; also a knife and fork of iron." These objects have been permanently lost outside the island.

2. *Dùnan na Nighean* (Balavetchy).—Possibly a dun. See Part II. of this paper.

3. *Dùn Tealtaig* (Uragaig).—This is a promontory site, without existing defences apart from its naturally strong position. It is defended on three sides by the sea, and has a narrow causeway to the mainland on the east (Pl. XV, 2).

A few circular huts can still be seen on the headland, thus supporting Professor Watson's derivation for *Tealtaig* from a Norse word containing an element meaning "hut."

4. *Dùn Uragaig* (Uragaig) (fig. 3).—Another promontory fort, this time of a pattern not met elsewhere on the islands. There are extremely steep drops on all sides except the south, which is defended by a wall 3 feet high spanning the causeway, and with a narrow gap in the middle. Immediately behind this wall, and following its line, is a cluster of seven huts on the west of the entrance, and at least eight on the east. There are no signs of occupation on the rest of the promontory.

The larger huts are over 20 feet across inside, some are circular and some subrectangular, with well-defined entrances in some cases

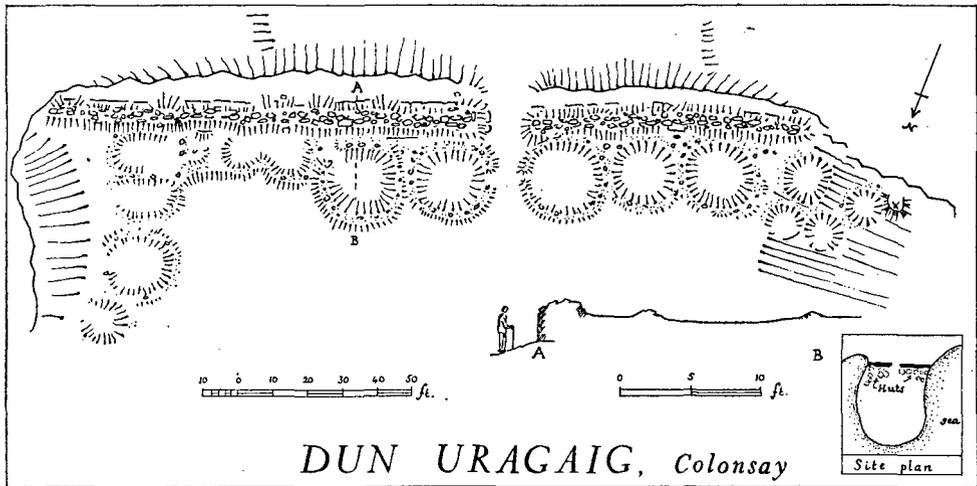


Fig. 3.

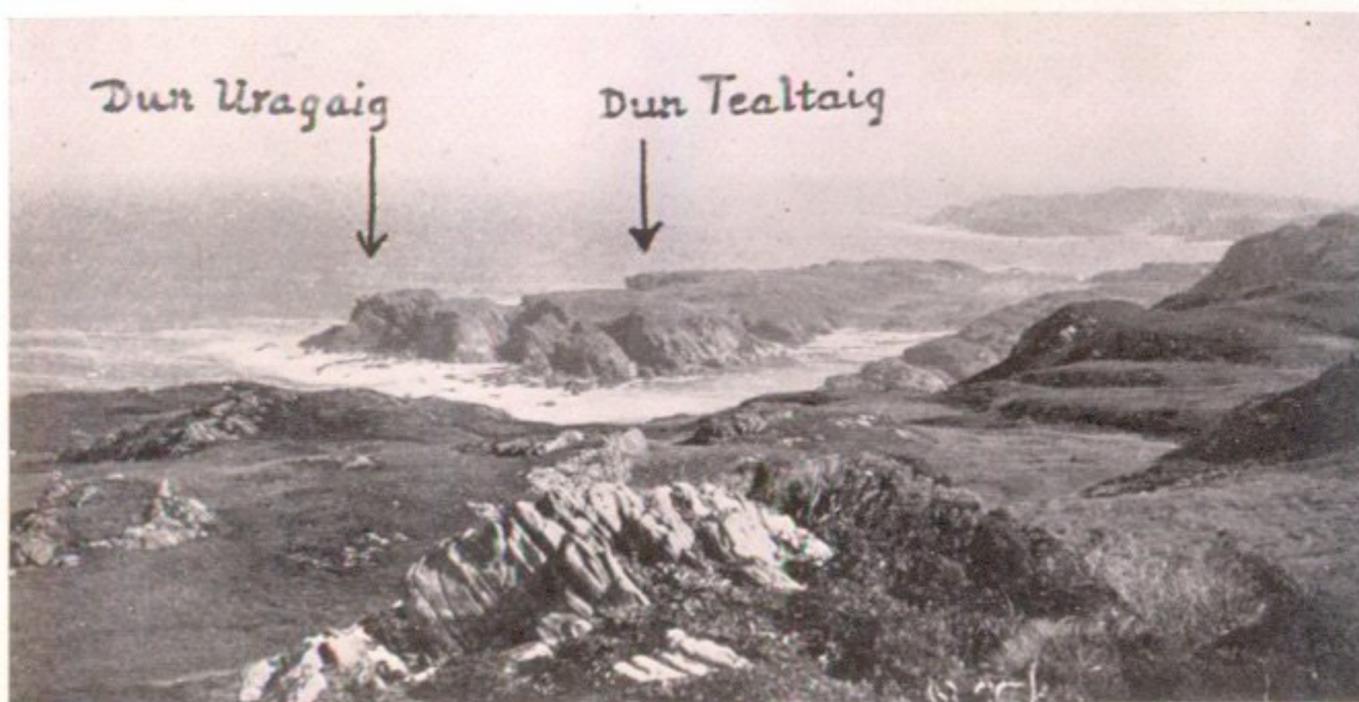
and walling about 1 foot high at most. The floor-level in these huts is unfortunately almost on the natural rock, so that finds, were the site excavated, would in all likelihood be rare.

5. *Dùn Eibhinn* (Scalasaig) (fig. 4).—A high flat-topped, steep-sided hill overlooking Scalasaig. The fort rises from boggy land, and is the best-preserved fortification on the islands. There are traces of a number of huts inside the ruined, but evidently strongly built walls surrounding the inner area, and there are other walls below the crest (not shown on the accompanying plan) which have been much drawn on for later building purposes. A great deal of debris is scattered on the slopes of the hill. A rectangular depression can be seen from the plan, under the lee of the south-west wall, and in all probability this may belong to the later (medieval) occupation of the hillside. Other late building remains are round the foot of the fort. The entrance, now somewhat altered and robbed, was narrow and on the north-east side.

On the strength of an early sixteenth-century tombstone in Iona,



1. Uaigh an Fhomhair, Colonsay. Kilchattan beyond.



2. West coast of Colonsay, showing Dùn Uragaig and Dùn Tealtaig.



1. Dùn Ghallain. Oronsay beyond.



2. Dùn Cholla. Entrance.



1. Dùn Cholla. Walling on north-east.



2. Dùn Cholla. Wall on north. Oronsay beyond.



1. Dùnan na Nighean. Site from east.



2. Dùnan na Nighean. External wall-face on east.



1. Dùnan na Nighean. Entrance from outside.



2. Dùnan na Nighean. Entrance from inside.

referring to the wife of Malcolm Macduffie, "Lord of Dunevin in Colonsay," Loder, following Grieve, says that this fort was "at one time

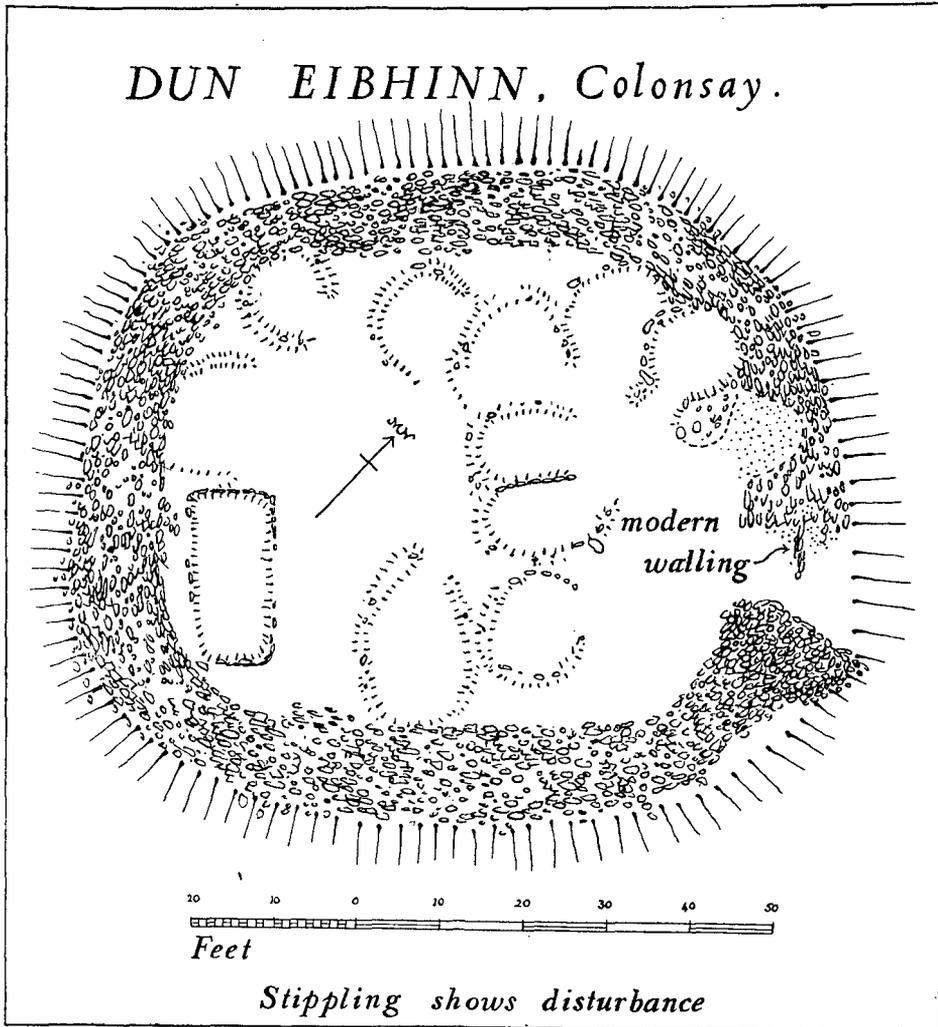


Fig. 4.

the residence of the Macduffie chieftains." Whether or not this was true, the initial building of the fort must have been earlier, and the medieval settlement may be marked by the ruins at the foot of the hill.

See also Martin, *Description of the Western Islands* (Edinburgh, 1703), for references to traditions associated with the site.

6. *Dùn Meodhonach* (Kilchattan).—Not seen. See p. 87.

7. *Dùn nan Leathan* (Machrins).—Small flat-topped hill on lower slopes near the junction of the roads from Garvard and from Machrins to Scalasaig. The walling, which is roughly circular and about 43 feet in diameter, does not exactly follow the contour of the hilltop. There is a possible entrance on the south-west.

8. *Dùn Ghallain* (Machrins).—Promontory fort jutting out into the Atlantic and with precipitous drops on three sides. The landward approaches from the east are well defended by two lines of defences, the plan of which is not very clear now without a measured drawing. The walls are well built of dry-stone walling, and many large stones have been used. There are traces of possible huts inside, and great quantities of fallen debris all round the hill show that the defences of the fort must originally have been exceedingly strong. This dun is probably not far removed in date from Dùns Meodhonach (Balnahard), Cholla, and Domhnuill. (See photograph, Pl. XVI, 1.)

9. *Dùn nan Con* (Garvard).—Small roughly circular enclosure on a low eminence overlooking the road from Scalasaig to Garvard. Walls loosely made of small stones and earth. Much overgrown with bracken, and I could find no obvious entrance. Construction similar to Dùnan Leathan.

Without excavation it would not be wise to quote analogies to such small structures, which may not be of very early date. But it is worth noting that Christison¹ remarks: "I found the remains of eight of the fifty-five Lorne forts to be of the broch size and circular form, but in several in which the foundations could be made out, the width of wall seemed to be much too little to accommodate the galleries and stairs of a broch."

10. *Dùn Cholla* (Balaromin Mór) (fig. 5).—Situated on high ground on the east of the road between Scalasaig and the Strand and Oronsay. It is most easily reached from the east, which is the only side that is not precipitous (Pl. XVI, 2). Its long axis, which measures 200 feet in length, is from north-east to south-west, and the cross-measurement is about 80 feet. The walling is over 10 feet wide in the best-preserved portions, and is cut on the east by an entrance only 5 feet wide (Pl. XVII, 1, 2). There are traces of outworks on the north-east and much debris is lying about the slopes. Inside the fort the ground is uneven with outcropping rocks, but there are signs of a wall which seems to make a small enclosure within the main walls in the south-east end of the fort. At the north-west end of the fort is a stone-walled hut-foundation 25 feet across. Concentrically within this is a set of post-holes, enclosing an area 12 feet across, and with a post-hole in the

¹ *Early Fortifications in Scotland* (1898), p. 236. See also "The Duns and Forts of Lorne," by David Christison, in *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. xxiii. (1888-89), pp. 368-432.

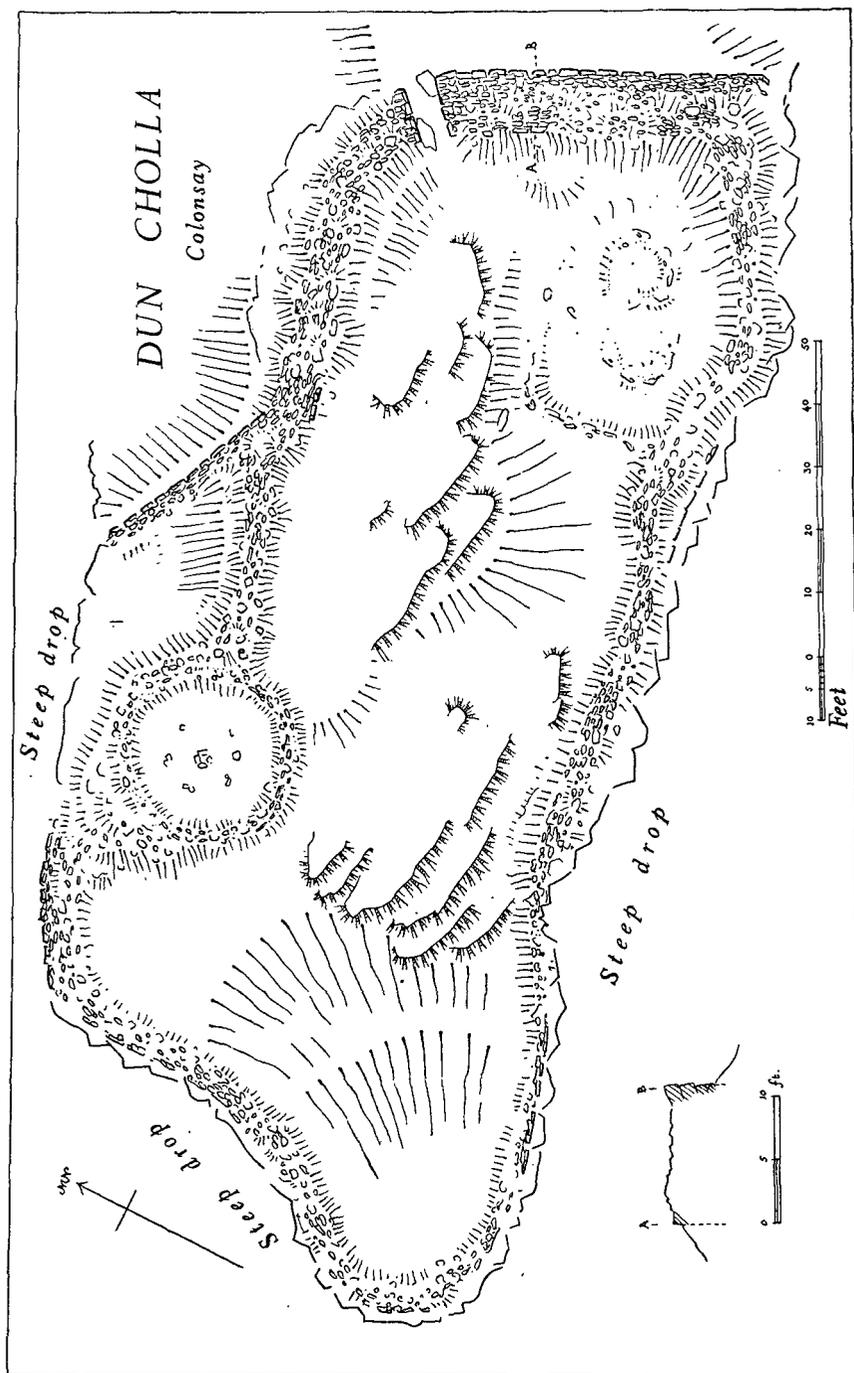


Fig. 5.

centre. This fort is one of the most spectacular on the island, and is structurally comparable with Dùn Meodhonach in Balnahard, and Dùn Domhnuill.

11. *Dùn Domhnuill* (Oronsay).—A contour fort, very similar in shape and size to Dùn Cholla. It is inland, and on a naturally strong oblong hill with steep drops on all sides, but less steep on the north, which has an additional line of stone-work. The walls have been much despoiled and overgrown, and I could not find a definite entrance. Slight vestiges of circular huts inside, mostly on the west side. Remains of a midden which, according to Grieve, has yielded no datable object.

12. *Dùn na Mara* (Balaromin Mór).—See under "Sites not Visited."

Dùn Mór (Balnahard).—Claimed by Grieve to be part of the fort of Dùn Leithinn, but there is nothing whatever to warrant such an imaginative suggestion. Of the walls only a short length remains on the north-west, and the rest, if they ever existed, are now entirely destroyed. It is likely that they once did exist, for the appearance of the site itself, on no very considerable eminence, and overlooked by higher hills, would not alone call for special designation.

Conclusions.

With regard to the dating of these small forts (Childe's "castles") we have nothing to guide us, and cannot have until some excavations have taken place. At the present stage of knowledge we do not know whether they were built at widely different times by local chieftains or whether, as is certainly suggested by their distribution in the Hebrides and along the west coast, they were in direct response to one or more threatened invasions. They certainly do seem to be distributed in such a way as to form a defensive chain against a seaward invasion; but again one must stress the danger of drawing conclusions from a map showing the distribution of possibly widely differing types of stronghold. Christison, with whom I cannot agree, tries to explain the distribution of western Scottish forts in the following way. He says: "Thus the complete isolation of the 170 forts of the Argyll mainland, their great abundance on the seaboard of Kintyre, and on the east side of the Firth of Lorne, their abrupt cessation north of Lismore, and their gradual diminution eastward in the county, point probably enough to the settlement of the Dalriadic Scots, first consolidating their position on the coast, in order to keep up their communications with Ireland, and afterwards spreading eastwards through Argyll."¹ But surely a people landing from the sea would not be

¹ *Early Fortifications in Scotland*, pp. 382-3. For the map see Childe, *Prehistory of Scotland*, Map IV, pp. 274-5.

content with forts built right on the coast; they would build them some distance inland to help them to subjugate the inland districts. Possibly our forts were built *against* but surely not *by* the Scotti. If this were so, a date for them in the sixth to seventh centuries would be probable. The *Annals of Ulster* certainly substantiate the fact that some, at least, of the forts were in use about that time. But again we have difficulty, for barely any of the duns mentioned in the *Annals* can be identified to-day. And a much earlier date has been demonstrated for some Scottish forts.¹

We can gain little knowledge either from finds so far discovered or by analogy. Excavation only is likely to help us, and that method may not meet with immediate success in highland regions where finds are scarce and the culture poor. But it is an urgent need of the future that a fort of a type characteristic of many should be extensively excavated, and it is to be hoped that this may be possible at a not too distant date.

II. THE MONUMENT OF DUNAN NA NIGHEAN. By STUART and C. M. PIGGOTT.

This site, No. 2 of the list and map (fig. 2), was visited by us in June 1945 and found to be a puzzling construction which must be discussed in some detail (Pl. XVIII, 1). It stands on a small rocky knob in moorland near the coast above Port a' Bhualtein, with a fine view eastwards towards Jura, Scarba, and the Firth of Lorne, and in its present condition (fig. 6) consists of a mass of tumbled stones rising to some 5 or 6 feet high, with intermittent traces of the lower courses of a retaining wall of coursed blocks following an ovate form approximating to the natural shape of the rock on which it is set. On the east, however, a straight wall-face of massive stones still stands 6 feet high and is 30 feet long, pierced centrally by a still complete doorway 2·5 feet wide and 3·6 feet high, with a massive lintel and remains of at least two courses of walling above (fig. 7, and Pls. XVIII, 2, and XIX, 1, 2).

Inside this doorway is a passage with original coursed walling extending for 7 feet longitudinally and rising to 4·5 feet to the remaining cap-stones which form a roof a foot higher than the opening beneath the lintel. Slight corbelling of two or three courses is used beneath the cap-stones, and there are no traces of door-checks or bar-holes in the walls. At 7·5 feet from the

¹ We must not overlook the possibility that some of the forts may have been in use against the Norse invaders in the ninth century. This might account for the Norse personal names attached to them in several cases. It is worth noting here, too, that a place in Balavetchy has the name *Cearnaborg*, for which Professor Watson suggested the derivation from Norse *kjarna-borg*, meaning something like "best or chief fort." "Borg" can also mean village or settlement, and in either case the name suggests fascinating possibilities.

entrance is a stone forming a sill or step 0.9 feet high, on the further edge of which is a broken stone 0.7 feet high which extends three-quarters of

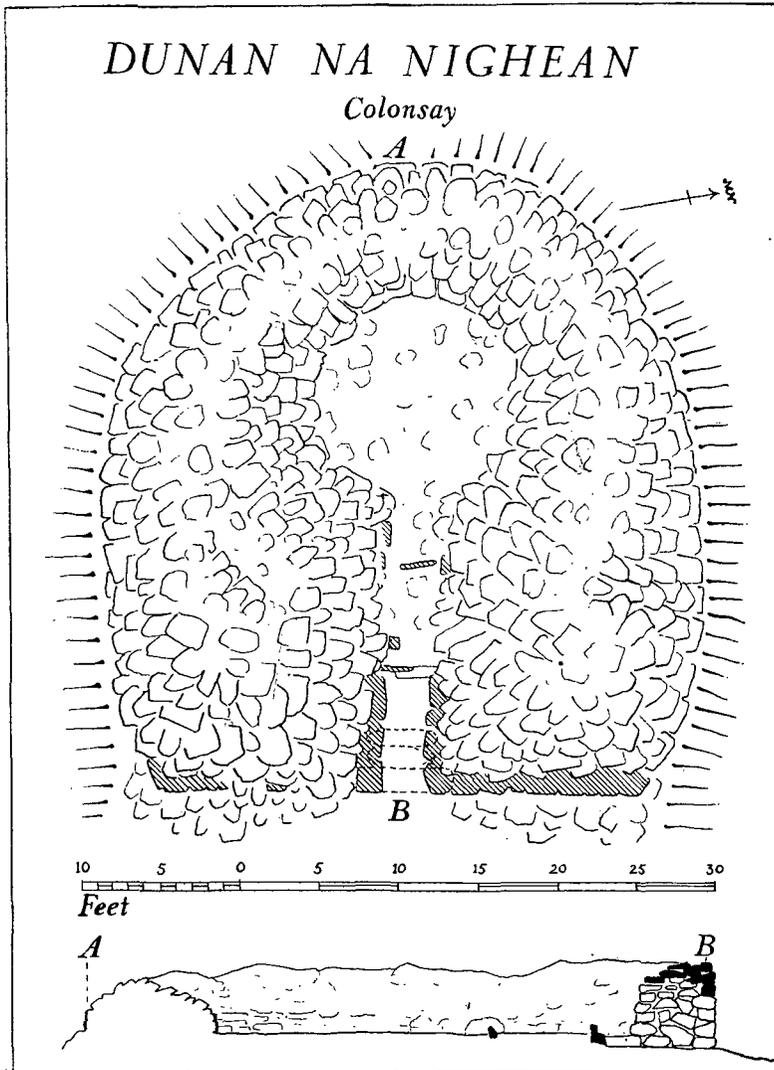


Fig. 6.

the way across the passage forming a "septal slab." Beyond this there is a central passage through the accumulated tumbled stones of the structure with occasional stones which appear to be earth-fast and *in situ*, indicating a constant width of 2.5 to 3.0 feet, and about 15 feet in from the entrance is another transverse thin stone on edge across this passage, suggesting

another "septal stone." At 19 feet from the entrance the passage opens into a circular area 11 feet in diameter with traces of the lower courses of walling on its circumference, above which the tumbled stones of the rest of the interior rise to a height of about 3 feet.

Beyond this structure to the east are the lower courses of a wall enclosing an irregular area outside the straight wall with its entrance, much overgrown with heather but apparently secondary.

The interpretation of these remains is not easy. The interior is so much ruined beyond the 7 feet of entrance passage that one is not able to speak with absolute certainty of its features, but those which have been described

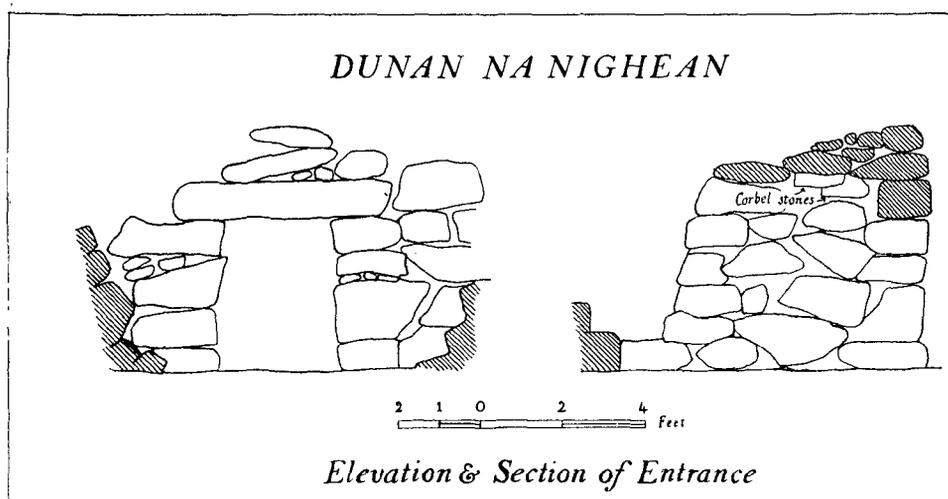


Fig. 7.

above and shown on the plan seemed to both of us reasonably definite. If one were to consider the site as a small dun—a "castle" in Childe's classification—one would have to assume that the apparent circular chamber and the entrance passage beyond the sill and first "septal stone" were the fortuitous result of fallen stones and subsequent robbing for dyke-building, and one would then have a fortified site measuring about 40 feet overall in both directions, with a straight eastern wall with central doorway and an inner area surrounded by a wall 8 or 10 feet thick, leaving a clear space of some 20 by 25 feet. The absence of door-checks or bar-holes at the entrance is noteworthy. These measurements are not impossible to reconcile with such a site, and excavation of *Dùnán na Nighean* might prove this to be the correct diagnosis, but the remains as they now stand admit of another interpretation, namely that the site is that of a ruined cairn containing a passage-grave with corbelled chamber, and having an impressive flat façade flanking the entrance.

Before examining this claim in detail, it will be convenient to consider very briefly the archaeological background against which such a monument would have to be placed. Daniel¹ had recently emphasised the importance in the north-western series of passage-graves of what he has named the Pavian type from the cemetery of Pavia in Portugal—a circular chamber with a passage normally about one and a half times the diameter of the chamber in length, the whole executed in orthostats or in coursed walling, the latter method of course implying partial or complete corbelling over of the chamber. Of these two building techniques, that of walling with corbelled *tholoi* should be, if the connection with Iberia be accepted, a feature implying an early stage in megalithic colonisation wherever it appears. Such tombs have been recorded from Brittany and Normandy, and in Jersey, La Sergenté is, as pointed out by Jacquetta Hawkes,² a good example of this class of passage-grave. In Ireland, among the passage-graves of the Boyne Culture, such *tholoi* and approach-passages in non-orthostatic construction occur at Tibbradden in the Dublin group of tombs, and at Slieve Gullion in Armagh,³ while in Scotland the Clava cairns (Daniel's Moray Group) show the same form in the typologically earlier examples such as Balnuaran 10 and 12.⁴ In Shetland, the "heel-shaped cairns" recently defined by Bryce,⁵ to which reference will be made again in another context, have irregularly cruciform chambers and approach-passages in non-orthostatic masonry (though at Mangaster is an orthostatic passage and chamber of Pavian type). But, excepting these Shetland tombs, all the other examples cited have a circular or roughly circular cairn without a deliberately emphasised façade. Dimensions are surprisingly concordant throughout the group with circular chambers, the chamber itself varying from 10 to 12 feet in diameter and the passage from 14 to 18 feet: comparable measurements at Dùnan na Nighean are 11 feet and 19 feet.

The presence of septal stones across the passage is not recorded in any of the *tholoi* mentioned above, but need hardly occasion surprise in a west Scottish monument. Such stones occur in the cruciform passage-graves of the Boyne group as well as in the segmented gallery-graves of the Clyde-Carlingford group, and nearer to Colonsay they occur in the passage-grave of Rudh' an Dunain in Skye⁶ and in the surely hybrid passage-grave/gallery-grave of Cletraval in North Uist.⁷

The Cletraval tomb has an additional interest in the present context,

¹ *Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, vol. vii. (1941), pp. 12 ff.

² *Arch. of the Channel Islands*, vol. ii. p. 90.

³ *Proc. Prehist. Soc.*, vol. iv. (1938), p. 241; *Prelim. Survey Anc. Mons. N. Ireland*, pp. 76-77 and Pl. XVI.

⁴ *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. xviii. (1884), p. 328; cf. also Avielochan, *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. xlv. (1910), p. 200; and Childe in *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. lxxviii. (1944), p. 26.

⁵ *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. lxxiv. (1940), p. 23.

⁶ *Ibid.*, vol. lxvi. (1932), p. 183

⁷ *Ibid.*, vol. lxix. (1935), p. 480.

as it has a flat façade (*i.e.* one running straight and nearly at right angles on each side of the entrance) constructed of orthostats linked by dry walling. Scott has recorded another instance of this feature at Unival, also in North Uist¹ (and to comparative examples may be added the West Kennet long barrow in Wiltshire),² and in the heel-shaped cairns of Shetland already referred to, the slightly concave, nearly flat façades are normally built of massive but non-orthostatic walling.

It will be seen, therefore, that parallels both for the general type and for detailed features of Dùnan na Nighean interpreted as a passage-grave site are to be found in areas and circumstances that make their combination in Colonsay by no means improbable. If, *pace* Childe, Daniel is right in considering the Clava cairns to come early in the Scottish passage-grave series (a view which seems to have a very great deal to recommend it), our Colonsay site may occupy a very important position between the Irish *tholoi*, as for instance at Slieve Gullion, and those round the Moray Firth, for surely the line of colonisation between these two areas (if the linking up of the two groups of *tholoi* be accepted) would be up the Firth of Lorne and along the Great Glen.

We suggest, in view of these facts, that there is a tenable case for interpreting the Dùnan na Nighean monument as a ruined passage-grave within a roughly circular cairn, having a circular *tholos* chamber originally corbelled and with a symmetrical flat façade at the entrance. It is possible that this façade may imply a gallery-grave tradition fused with more orthodox passage-grave ideas, but examples of such fusion in Western Scotland are not unknown.³ Excavation of the site, with the accurate determination of its internal plan, alone seems likely to bring the problem a stage nearer solution.

III. A NEW CHAMBERED TOMB, AND DUNS IN ISLAY.

By STUART and C. M. PIGGOTT.

We were able to carry out a week's field-work, mainly by bicycle or on foot, in western Islay in June 1945. Attention was particularly directed to visiting sites of duns which had not been included by Professor Childe in his "Notes on Some Duns in Islay" in *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. lxxix. (1935), pp. 81-84, and the 1-inch Ordnance map, Popular Edition, Sheet 69, War Revision, 1940, was used as a basis for the identification of sites. This map is overprinted with the Cassini Grid, and references are given by this simple and accurate method for the benefit of those who may use gridded sheets in

¹ *Antiquity*, vol. xvi. (1942), p. 305.

² Inadequately shown on Thurnam's plan in *Arch.*, vol. xxxviii. p. 410, but clearly visible on the site. *Wilts. Arch. Mag.*, vol. l. (1946), p. 57.

³ Though Scott (*loc. cit.*, *supra*) has recently controverted this view.

the future (*cf.* a note on the use of military map grids for archæological purposes in *Ant. Journ.*, vol. xxv. (1945), p. 80). Duns visited by Childe were numbered up to 25, and our numbering has therefore continued from this in the text and on the map, fig. 2. One new dun site unrecorded on the map was found (No. 26), in addition to a new chambered tomb and the probable remains of others, and some minor sites.

A. Megalithic Monuments and Allied Sites.

Gallery-Grave near Port Charlotte. (Grid Ref. 746814.)

On the east side of the main road from Port Charlotte to Portnahaven, between it and the sea and half a mile from the former village, remains of a chambered tomb lie in a large grass field partly used as a recreation ground, and occupying the level area on top of a raised beach. The field has at some time been under plough, and the cairn originally containing the grave is much mutilated at its edges as well as badly robbed for stones, but its approximate present form is shown on the plan (fig. 8). The extant remains of the chamber show it to belong to the well-known class of segmented gallery-graves of the Clyde estuary, two examples of which had previously been recorded in Islay, in the Port Ellen neighbourhood at Cragabus and Ballynaughton.¹ The gallery appears to have been some 23 feet long by 4 feet wide, and originally divided into four compartments by septal stones, two of which, that at the entrance and the next beyond, remain *in situ*. A large stone lying across the entrance appears to be a fallen portal stone, and slipped corbels are visible in the remains of the cairn which fringe the chamber. The forecourt area is mutilated by ploughing and stone-robbing, but appears to have been originally of crescentic form. The monument is a welcome addition to the Clyde group of cairns, and agrees well in its proportions and dimensions with such fine tombs as East Bennan, Giant's Grave, and Carn Ban in Arran, all with the gallery about 24 feet long and an overall width across the "horns" of some 60 feet. (Not on 1-inch map.)

Probable Ruined Gallery-Grave, Brahunisary, near Port Ellen. (Grid Ref. 873698.)

This site is situated on the south side of the road which turns off from the Port Ellen-Lagavulin road to the farm of Brahunisary, below the Borraichill Mór hill-fort (Childe's No. 10, where the name is given as "Borraniebill Mór"), and 350 yards due south of the farm, just within the 150-foot contour and by a farm track. There are irregular remains of a cairn up to 3 feet high and now measuring about 40 by 15 feet. One stone, presumed to be a side stone of the gallery, is standing near the middle of the south-west side of this ruined cairn, 7 feet long by 2 feet 6 inches high and 1 foot thick.

¹ *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. xxxvi. (1902), pp. 110-4.

There are other large stones near, but nothing certainly *in situ*. The axis of the structure would be roughly north-west-south-east. (Not on 1-inch map.)

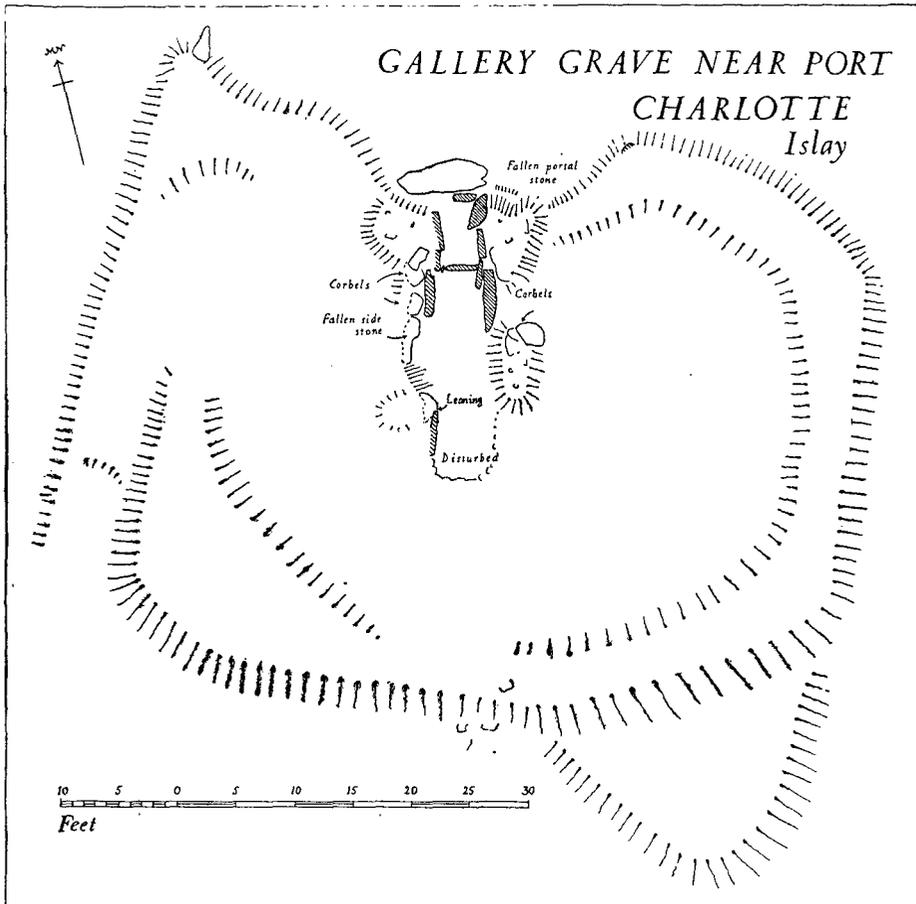


Fig. 8.

Possible Ruined Megalithic Tomb near Dùn Chroisprig. (Grid Ref. 704856.)

Below Dùn Chroisprig (Childe's No. 21 but re-described and planned below) is a group of stones with remains of cairn material about them, lying nearer the sea than the dun and between it and the road from Kilchiaran to Kilchoman. Several stones are on edge and earth-fast, and others are fallen or leaning, and the whole suggests a small burial-chamber with remains of half a crescentic forecourt and façade. The form and arrangement of the stones which would constitute the chamber on this supposition are not,

however, comparable with the comparatively thin flat slabs normally used in tombs of the Clyde type to form rectangular compartments. It is planned in fig. 9. (Not on 1-inch map.)

Standing-Stone at Uisquintuie. (Grid Ref. 790873).

A large and conspicuous standing-stone is situated half a mile west of the Uisquintuie road-fork on the coast road round the head of Loch Indaal between Bridgend and Bruichladdich. The stone stands on the crest of an old shore-line north of the road, and is 11 feet high, 5 feet wide, and 2 feet thick. It is not marked on the 1-inch map.

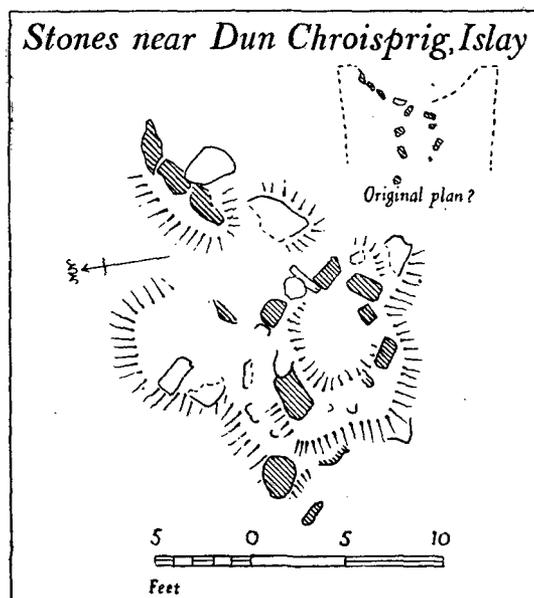


Fig. 9.

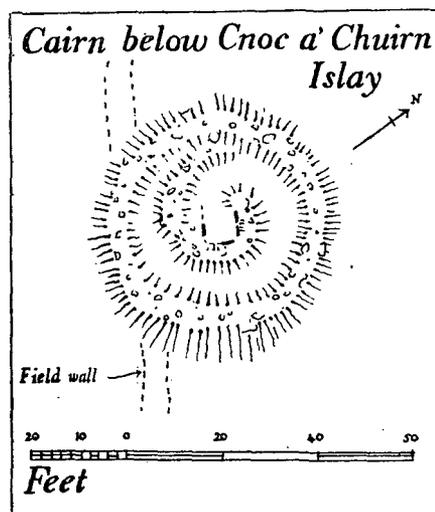


Fig. 10.

Cairn with Cist below Cnoc a' Chuirn, Port Charlotte. (Grid Ref. 738806.)

On the west side of the road from Port Charlotte to Portnahaven, one and one-eighth miles from the former village, are the remains of a small cairn within an enclosing circular wall or bank (fig. 10). This enclosing circle appears to be a ruined and grass-grown wall 40 feet in diameter, within which is a cairn about 20 feet across which has been dug into, with the spoil thrown out on the north-west, exposing side stones of a cist 6 feet across between the two sides now visible on north-east and south-west. The cairn stands not more than 1 foot 6 inches to 2 feet high, and the enclosing circle is about 2 feet 6 inches high above the surrounding ground. A grass-grown and collapsed field wall of a now-deserted crofter's settlement is built against the south-west side of the ring. (Not on 1-inch map.)

B. Duns and Fortified Sites.

Dùn Chroisprig (Childe's No. 21). (Grid. Ref. 705856.)

This site has already been briefly described by Childe in his paper cited above, but we have made a plan (fig. 11) recording certain structural features which seem to us to merit fuller description. The dun is built on a knob of

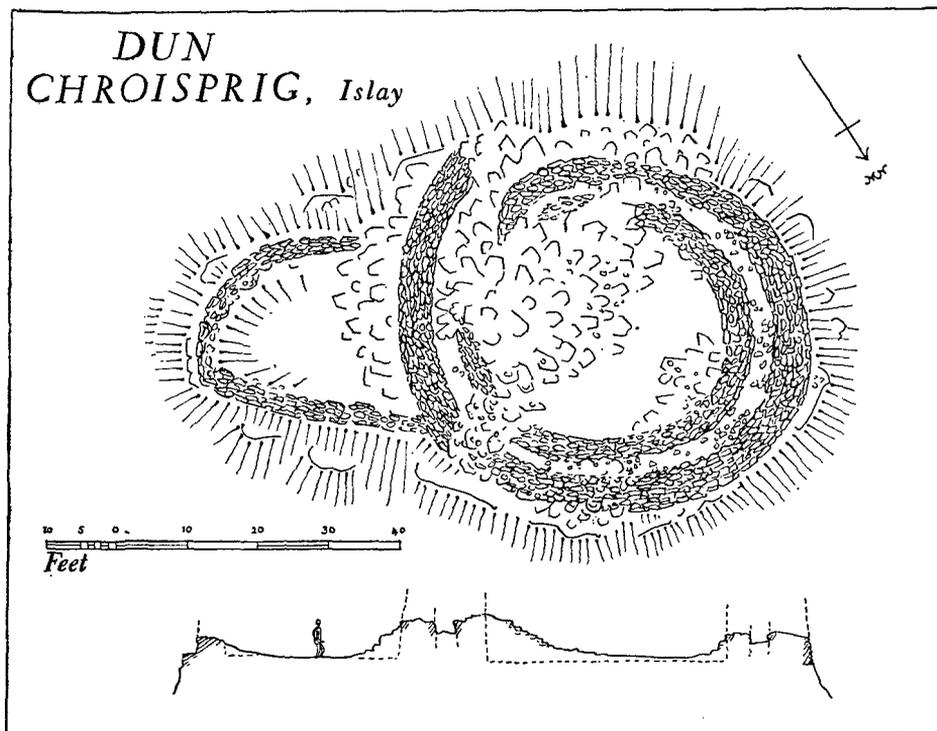


Fig. 11.

rock with almost precipitous slopes below a 400-foot-high rocky hill overlooking the long, sandy beach of Machir Bay to the west. The main structure is roughly circular, consisting of a massive wall of coursed stones 12 feet thick and containing for almost the whole of its circuit traces of a central passage or gallery 2 feet 6 inches to 3 feet wide. The outer wall-face still stands to a height of 3 to 4 feet on the north-west, and must stand nearly 6 feet high beneath tumbled stones on the south-east, and has a slight but perceptible inward batter. The site is therefore that of a *galleried dun* or even a *broch*, comparable with that identified by Childe at *Dùn Bhoraraic* near Port Askaig on the north-eastern shore of Islay. There is a very large quantity of tumbled stones strewn the site and the slopes of the rock

on which it stands, implying walls of some height. The entrance appears to have been on the south-west (seaward) side and is very much obscured by fallen stones. There is, however, a definite incurved face to the left-hand wall (as one stands facing the entrance from outside), and it seems possible that the entrance led direct to a stair within the wall thickness, as the outer element of the right-hand wall overlaps considerably, as can be seen on the plan. Galleried duns have been described by Childe,¹ and since this they have been further discussed by Fairhurst in his publication of his excavation of the Kildonan galleried dun in Kintyre²—a site which, apart from medieval reconstructions, appeared to date from between the third and seventh centuries A.D.

On the south-eastern side of Dùn Chroisprig an area 25 by 20 feet is enclosed by the remains of a wall of coursed stones, probably subsequent to the main galleried structure.

26. *Galleried Dun or Broch, Traigh Mhachir.* (Grid Ref. 703859.)

At the southern end of the Traigh Mhachir beach an unrecorded site was found on a small rocky knoll above the sea, just to the west of the Kilchiaran-Kilchoman road immediately before it degenerates into a trackway. It is the much destroyed remains of another galleried dun or broch of the Dùn Chroisprig type, its overall outside measurements being 78 feet north-south and 68 feet east-west, with traces of a gallery on the south side 3 feet wide, and visible for a length of 35 to 40 feet. The outside wall is here 4 to 5 feet thick, but the inner wall-face is nowhere traceable. The walls are of coursed masonry but nowhere more than a few courses high. (Not on 1-inch map.)

27. *Dun below Cnoc na h-Uamha, Bruichladdich.* (Grid Ref. 741860.)

On a rocky knob in water-logged moorland westwards beyond the farm of Gartacharra and one and a half miles from Bruichladdich. This is a small dun of Childe's "castle" type, irregularly oval in plan, with overall outside measurements 60 by 46 feet. The interior is piled with tumbled stones and no inner wall-face can be traced, but the outer face is preserved to a height of 8 feet on the north-west and is slightly battered, of good quality coursed stonework. There is an entrance 6 feet wide on the south-east, and no trace of galleries in the walls.

28. *Dun at Rockside, Kilchoman.* (Grid Ref. 721875.)

On a knoll adjacent to the farm of Rockside, half a mile north-east of Kilchoman Church. This is a very small "castle" type of dun, roughly D-shaped, with a probable entrance on the south-east and with overall

¹ *Prehist. of Scotland*, pp. 201 ff., with refs.

² *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, vol. lxxiii. (1939), p. 185.

measurements of 30 by 27 feet. It appears to consist of a rampart of stones and earth rather than a true stone wall, which is not above 2 feet or so in height.

29. "*Fort*" at *Ballygrant* (Childe's No. 14). (Grid Ref. 884902.)

This is a small promontory fort on the end of a ridge above Loch Finlaggan and a quarter of a mile north-west from Ballygrant School. The roughly triangular area, 105 by 54 feet, is enclosed by a much ruined stone wall which incorporated upright stones set on edge as facing. There is no recognisable entrance.

"*An Dun*" on *Rhinns Point*. (Grid. Ref. 676751.)

This site, marked as an antiquity on the 1-inch map, was found to be a natural rock-mass with precipitous sides but with no trace of artificial fortifications.

Note on the Plans.

The plans and sections illustrating the three parts of this paper have been made from field surveys with tape and prismatic compass, and do not pretend to the accuracy which would be expected from detailed surveys made with instruments and occupying a long period of time, such as would be necessary in advance of the excavation of any of the sites we have described.