

DUN BEAG (or DUN STRUAN BEAG) broch

' This broch was built in the centuries around the birth of Christ. It consists of a massive drystone wall containing a gallery, a stair and, near the entrance, guard chambers. The wall surrounds a courtyard in which the farmers and herdsmen who built the broch will have lived. Excavations by Countess Latour from 1914 to 1920 emptied it of all the debris which had accumulated in it over the years, and swept away late flimsy structures from the courtyard. These light buildings may have been those which Dr Johnson saw in 1772 or 1773 when he visited on his 'Journey to the Western Isles'.

Some of the finds made by Countess Latour illustrate the way of life of the early inhabitants: iron spears for hunting and fighting, crucibles and ingot-moulds for the casting of bronze, a pick made of antler for digging, coarse decorated pottery used for a multitude of everyday purposes, and glass beads and bangles. Other finds illustrate later uses of the broch. There was plentiful evidence of iron working, and coins ranging in date from the 12th to the late 18th century, taken with the buildings referred to by Dr Johnson, show that the broch continued in occupation at least intermittently until recent times.'

*W. H. Storer*

*Barbier*