

### III.

ERIDE HOUSE AT ERIBOLL, IN THE PARISH OF DURNES, SUTHERLANDSHIRE. BY ARTHUR MITCHELL, M.D., CORR. MEM. S.A. SCOT.

In a cultivated field behind the House of Eriboll there is an underground or eride house of considerable interest.

It was cleared out by Alexander Clarke, Esq., some years ago, and can now be minutely examined. No objects of interest were found during the excavation. Its site is not indicated by any knoll or accumulation of earth above it.

Reference is made to the following plans and sections (which are drawn to scale) as the briefest way of describing its construction and general features.

The whole length of the passage is 33 feet, but it is known to have been 10 or 12 feet longer than it is at present.

The passage at its entrance is less than 2 feet wide, and under 4 feet high. The average height of the passage is only 4 feet, and its average

width 2 feet. It is not straight, but shows a sharp bend at D, and a slight one at C.

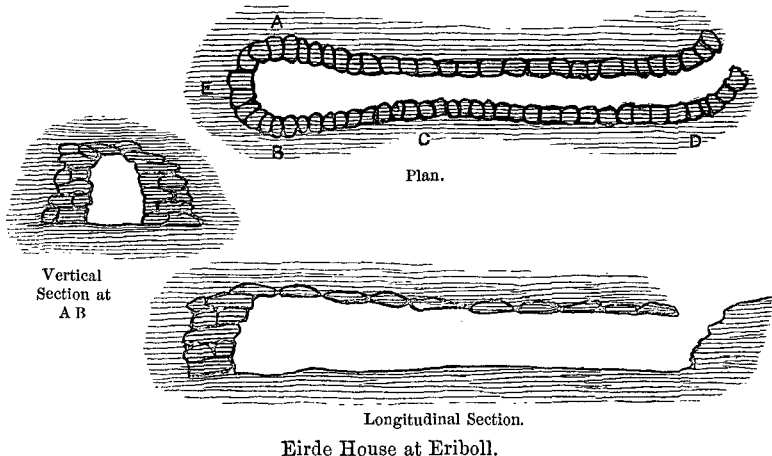
The expansion, or pear-shaped chamber, at the end gives the following measurements:—

At 1 foot from the end (E) it is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet wide, and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet high.

At 5 feet           "           "           2           "            $4\frac{1}{4}$            "

At 7 feet           "           "           2           "           4           "

That which gives interest and character to this eirde house is the smallness of the expansion or chamber, which, at its widest part, is only  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet, and this width it only retains for 3 feet of its length. It is exceedingly difficult to see what purpose such a structure could have served. It is worthy of note, however, that in the district similar underground houses are called "Leabidh fholaidh" or "Hiding beds."



Other structures of this kind exist in Sutherlandshire, but I believe this is the first which has been described. There is one known to me in Strath Helmsdale, near the river side, and about two miles above Kildonan Lodge.

Both of these resemble in a very striking manner the eirde houses which I recently described to the Society, and which are situated in Strathdon, Aberdeenshire.