

III.

EARTH-HOUSE AT CLYNE MILTON, IN THE PARISH OF CLYNE, SUTHERLAND. 1ST MAY 1929. BY R. J. SERJEANTSON, BRORA.

Twenty-five yards south-west of East Clyne Milton farmhouse, beneath the south border of the road, part of an Earth-house was uncovered by workmen excavating to put in a septic tank. Owing to its position it was not possible to uncover the entire site without intercepting the only access to the farmhouse.

The structure consists of a circular chamber of dry stone walling, coning inward slightly at the top, and measures from the floor 5 feet

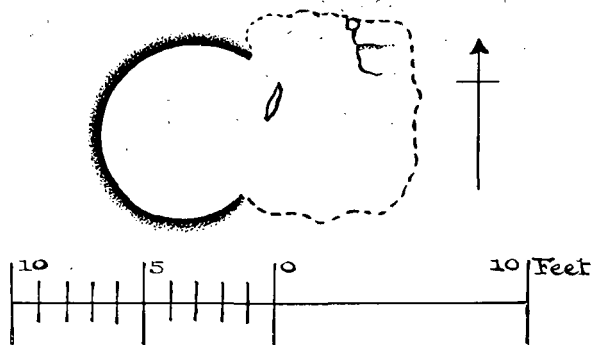


Fig. 1. Plan of Earth-house at Clyne Milton.

6 inches high. The top of the walling of the chamber reaches within 9 inches of the surface of the road, and doubtless when the road was made the covering slab disappeared and the chamber was filled with debris. On the floor of the chamber were several flagstones with clay between; these lay under a thick layer of charcoal. At the entrance of the chamber stood an upright stone (fig. 1). This, unfortunately, had been removed and broken up before the "house" was examined; however, its exact position could be ascertained. The fragments pieced together and measured, showed that it had stood 5 feet 6 inches high, and slightly tapered at the top. Its greatest breadth at the base was 17 inches by $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches, and where it entered the ground it was slightly pointed. A thick layer of charcoal surrounded the base, which suggests it stood isolated and possibly supported a superstructure. There were no markings on it.

At the east corner of the excavation (see plan) are indications of an entrance passage; a single stone may be part of the door jamb, and

two flagstones, one slightly higher than the other, suggest an ascending passage.

The workmen found indications of walling between this entrance and the termination of the north arm of the chamber; also the south arm of the chamber was slightly extended. Until they came across the circular chamber they did not realise they had found anything of antiquarian interest, after which they exercised the greatest care.